

THE #1 SOURCE FOR PS2 & PLAYSTATION!

100% INDEPENDENT

PSM

PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE

FEAR EFFECT 2

PlayStation's most ADULT title ever is our **GAME OF THE MONTH!**



HELL RAISERS

EXCLUSIVE:

Must-see screens of
SOUL REAVER 2
and the amazing
BLOOD OMEN 2

- Stalk your prey!
- Possess villagers!
- Hide in shadows!
- Incredible fighting!

PS2 VIRTUA FIGHTER 4

SPECIAL REPORT:

Sega to put its biggest games on PlayStation 2 and PSOne! No joke!

THE FUTURE OF FIGHTING GAMES

We reveal the new ideas that will put the genre back on top

HOT PS2 NEWS

- Parappa 3 Info
- The Matrix Games
- Final Fantasy Remakes

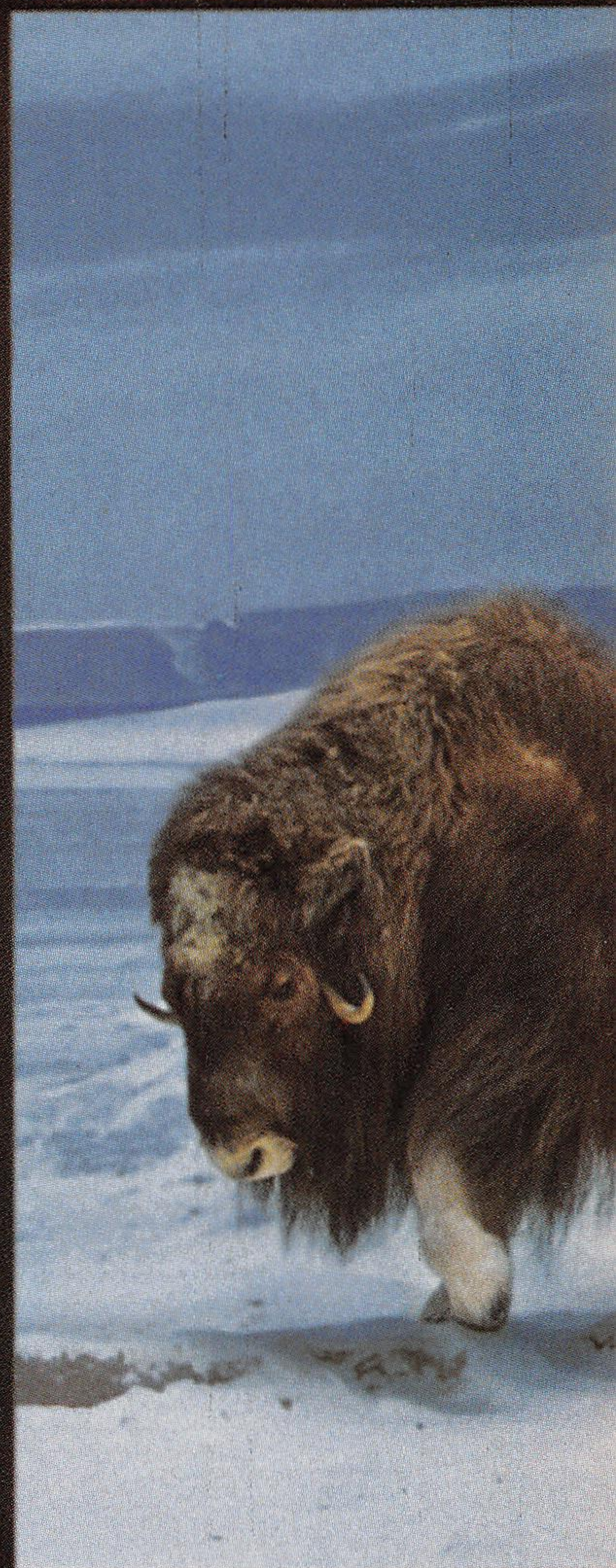




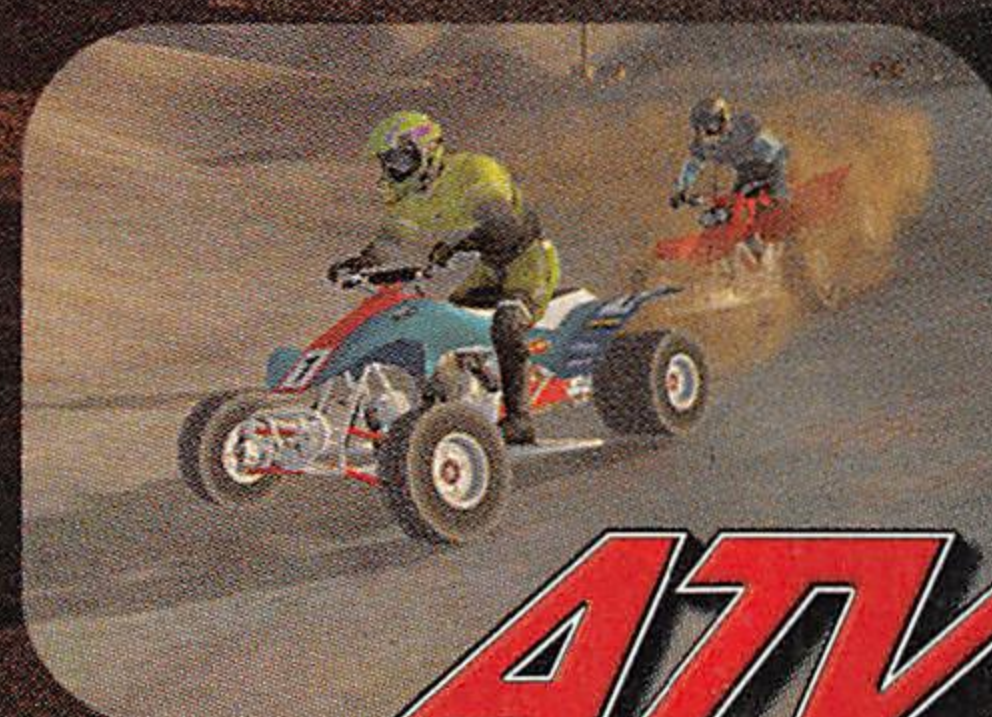
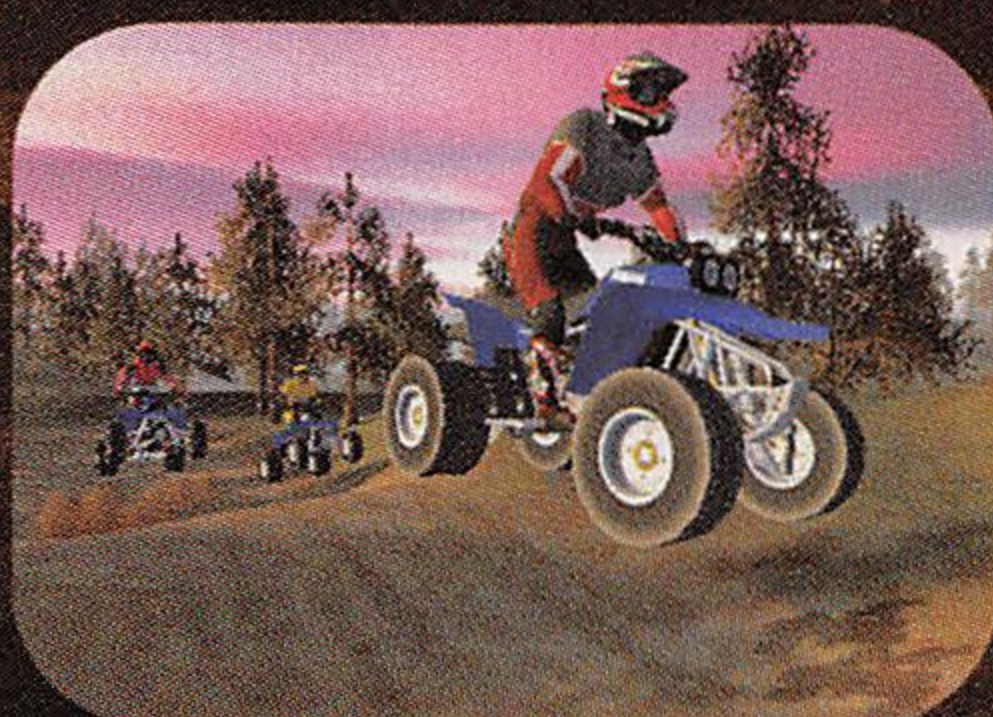
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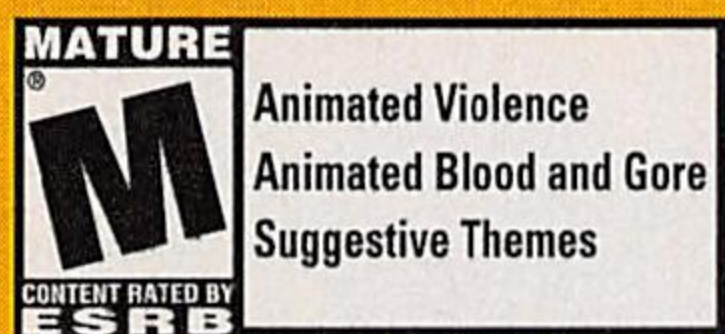
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PlayStation®2

ATV
Offroad
FURY

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THESE TWO LADIES PUT THE ASS IN ASSASSIN.

"...great plot points, plenty of action, incredible graphics and both of the female characters taking off their clothes for no good reason... it's everything we were hoping it would be."

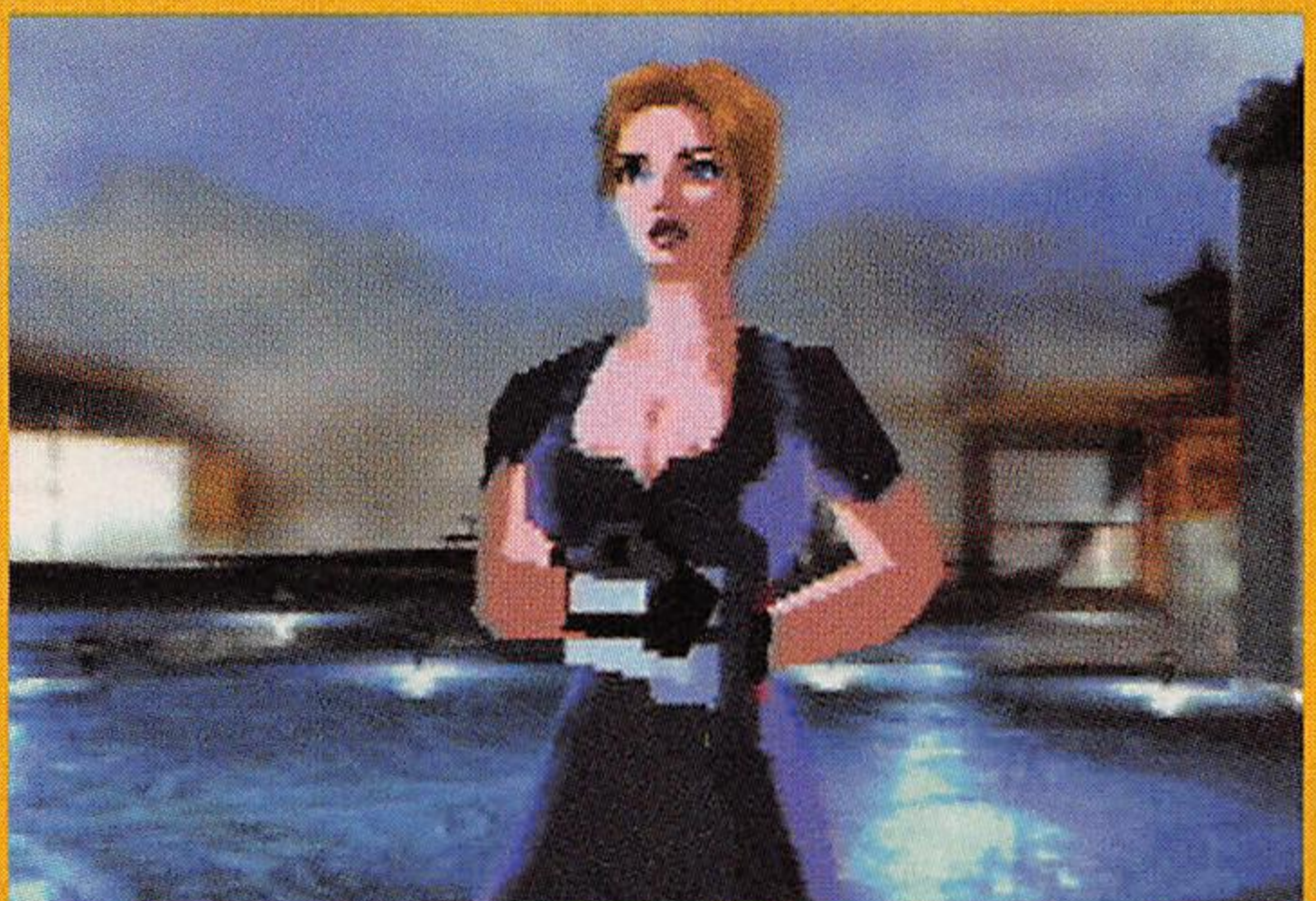
- DailyRadar.com



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Enemies react with cunning AI, but you'll be ready with uzis, grenade launchers, and 14 other deadly weapons.



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Animated Violence

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THREE HEROES ONE ENEMY ALL ACTION

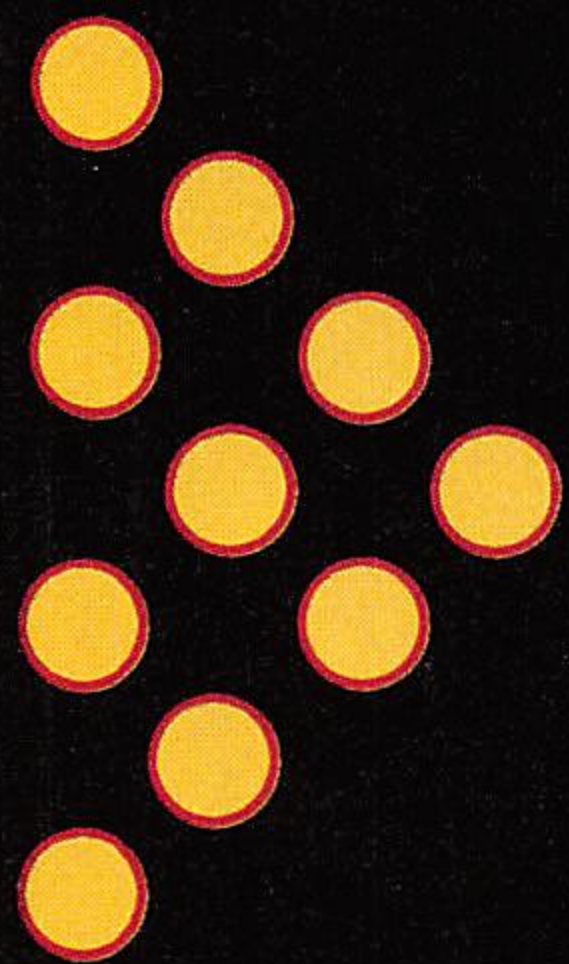
Inspired by LucasArts' rich *Star Wars* flight-game legacy, *STAR WARS STARFIGHTER* combines intense air and space combat in a fast-paced action-adventure. Live the lives of three fighter pilots in a series of harrowing missions to save the galaxy from the evil Trade Federation. Pilot extraordinary 3D vehicles—including the Naboo N-1 plus a variety of never-before-seen craft—through stunningly real worlds in 14-plus air and space missions.

STAR WARS STARFIGHTER™ PlayStation®2



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START

Welcome to the world's best PlayStation magazine



HAS THE WORLD GONE TOPSY-TURVY?

Sega games on PSone and PS2? Who'da thunk it? I mean, think about this for a second — just a few months back, Sega was bracing for an all-out console war against Sony, Nintendo and Microsoft; now they've joined sides with *all* of 'em. No matter how you feel about the situation, you've got to give Sega credit for swallowing its pride and making the best decision for the company — that can't have been easy.

Sega's multi-platform support will be *great* for gaming. The company's strength has always been software, and everyone can now look forward to more great games for whichever system they own.

Speaking of great games, we've got loads of 'em this issue, starting with *Soul Reaver 2* and *Blood Omen 2*, a couple of big-time PS2 sequels. We're hearing a really good buzz on these titles, so be sure to go and check 'em out! ► **CHRIS SLATE**

CHRIS SLATE Editor-In-Chief

LIKES: All types of games, especially the good ones
HOBBIES: Comics, hoops, J-Pop, movies, DVDs

How I avoid April Fools pranks...

I just beat everybody to the punch by pranking myself all day long. I shake up my soda cans, sit on whoopee cushions and stick notes on my back. Beat *that*, suckas!

"Just a few months back, Sega was bracing for an all-out console war"

MEET THE TEAM

Ever wonder what a crack team of videogame journalists look like? ...Aw, c'mon folks, work with us here...



STEPHEN FROST
SENIOR EDITOR (Reviews/Previews)

LIKES: Fighting, RPGs, Time Travel
HOBBIES: Centerfold Critic

How I avoid April Fools pranks...

I call up the Psychic Network and find out when people are going to prank me, then I beat them to it.



RANDY NELSON NEWS EDITOR

LIKES: Shooters, Racing, Platform
HOBBIES: Wrestling, Action Figures

How I avoid April Fools pranks...

I set the date back a day on everyone's computers, so when they try and pull their pranks, it's April 2 and they're the real fools. Suckas!



BILL DONOHUE
MANAGING EDITOR

LIKES: Cold Beer, Flight Sims
HOBBIES: Playing Music

How I avoid April Fools pranks...

I say stuff like "Sorry about your car... sorry about your legs... sorry about your Mom..." I *never* get pranked.



TOMMY LAYTON
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

LIKES: Shooters, RPGs, Action/Adv
HOBBIES: Running

How I avoid April Fools pranks...

None of the guys on the staff can run more than a few yards without dying, so I'm kinda hard to prank.



TOKOYA STRATEGY EDITOR

LIKES: Fighting, Action/Adv, RPGs
HOBBIES: Unreal Tournament

How I avoid April Fools pranks...

I just take the asses who feel that they can take advantage of me seriously. That throws them off. Hey, it worked in school...



GARY LIEW GRAPHIC DESIGNER

LIKES: Breathing, blinking
HOBBIES: Keeping nasal passages really, really clear.

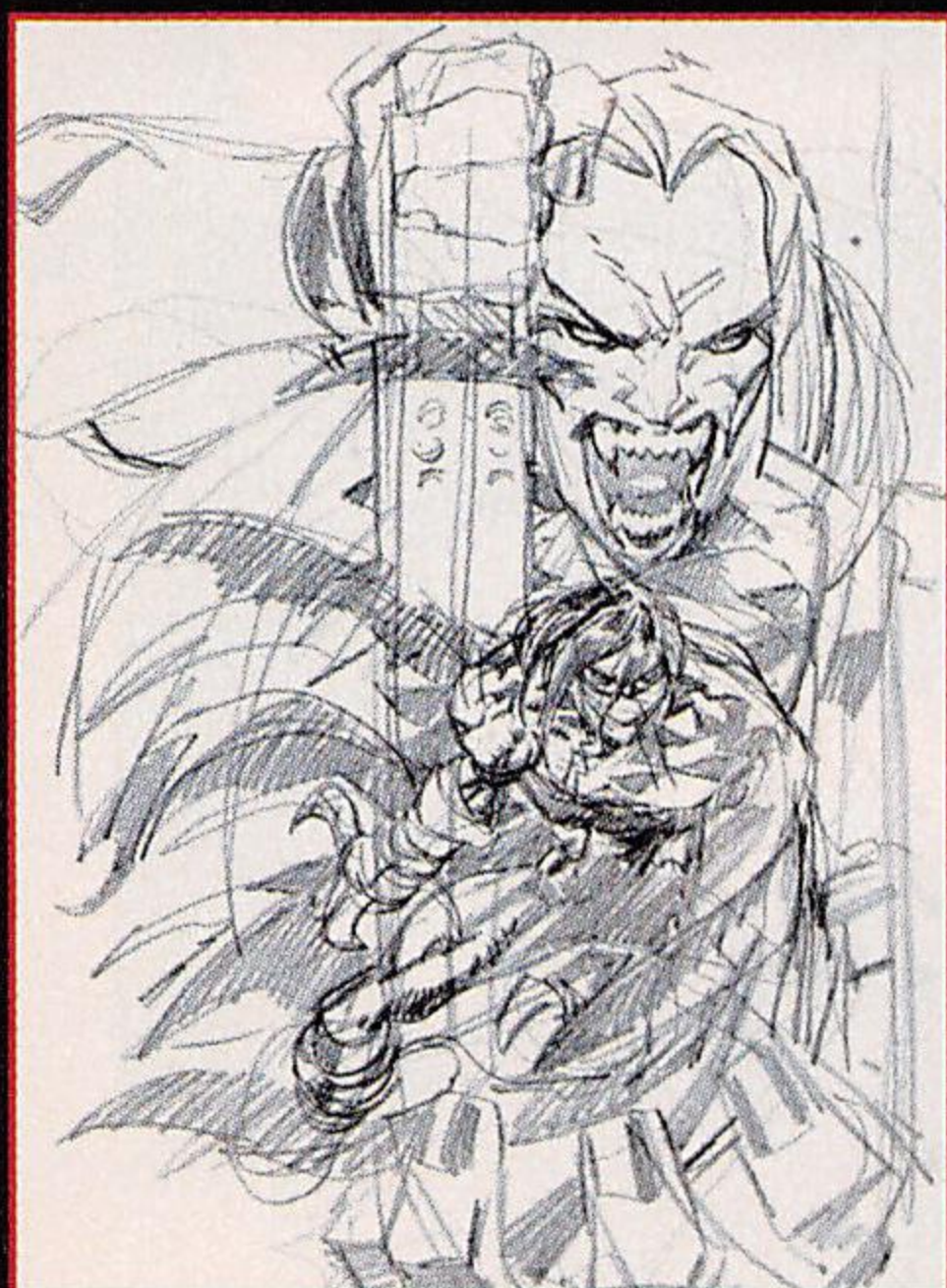
How I avoid April Fools pranks...

I am used to setting the calendar ahead a few months. That way, the joke is on them, and I laugh.

ON THE COVER



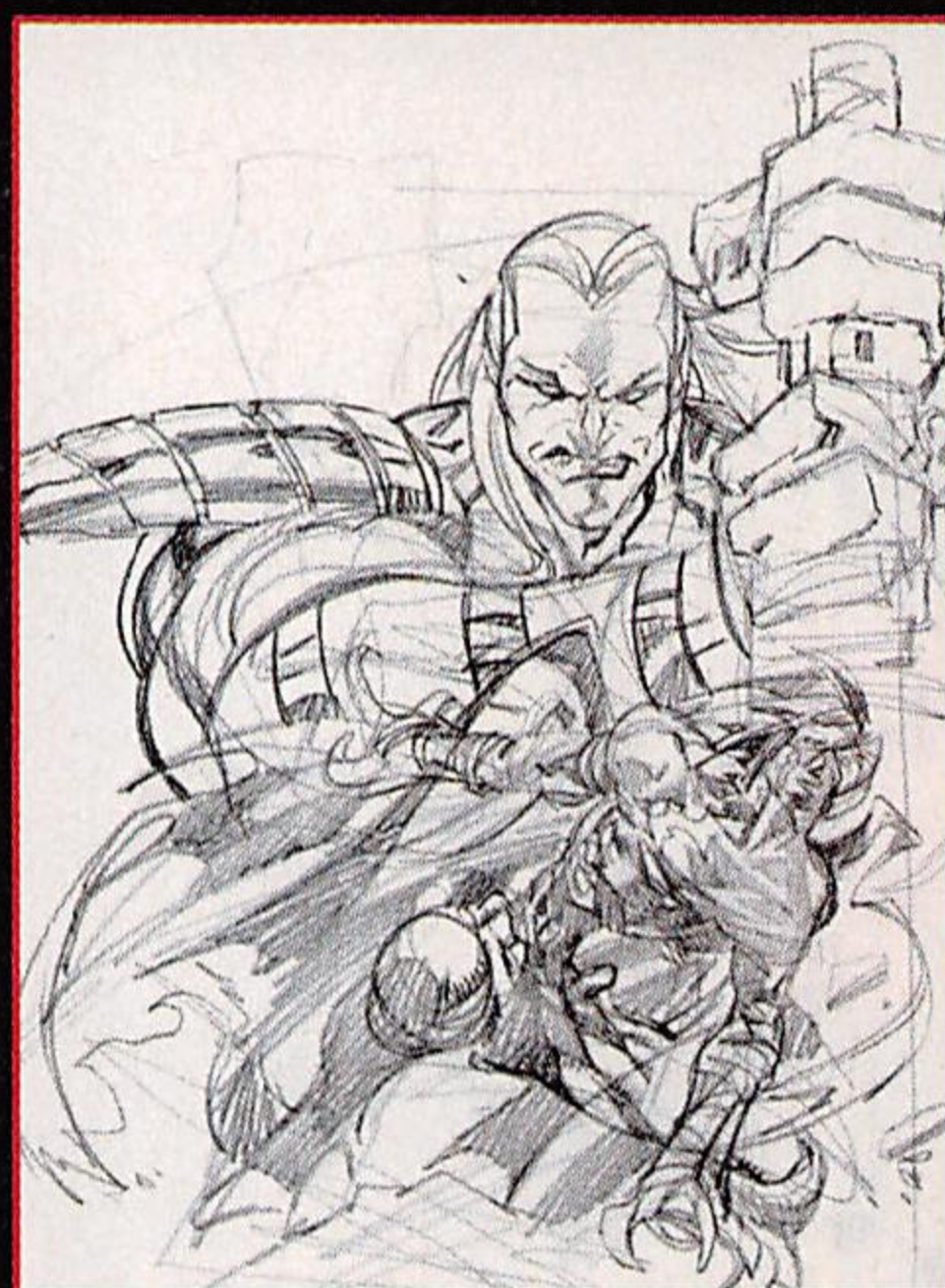
Every month we work with today's hottest comic book artists to create the custom PSM cover. This month we got to work with Ken Lashley, who is the regular monthly penciler for the top-selling 10th Muse comic. You might also recognize his work from the *SSX* "Game of the Year" illustration he did for issue 42. Thanks a ton, Ken!



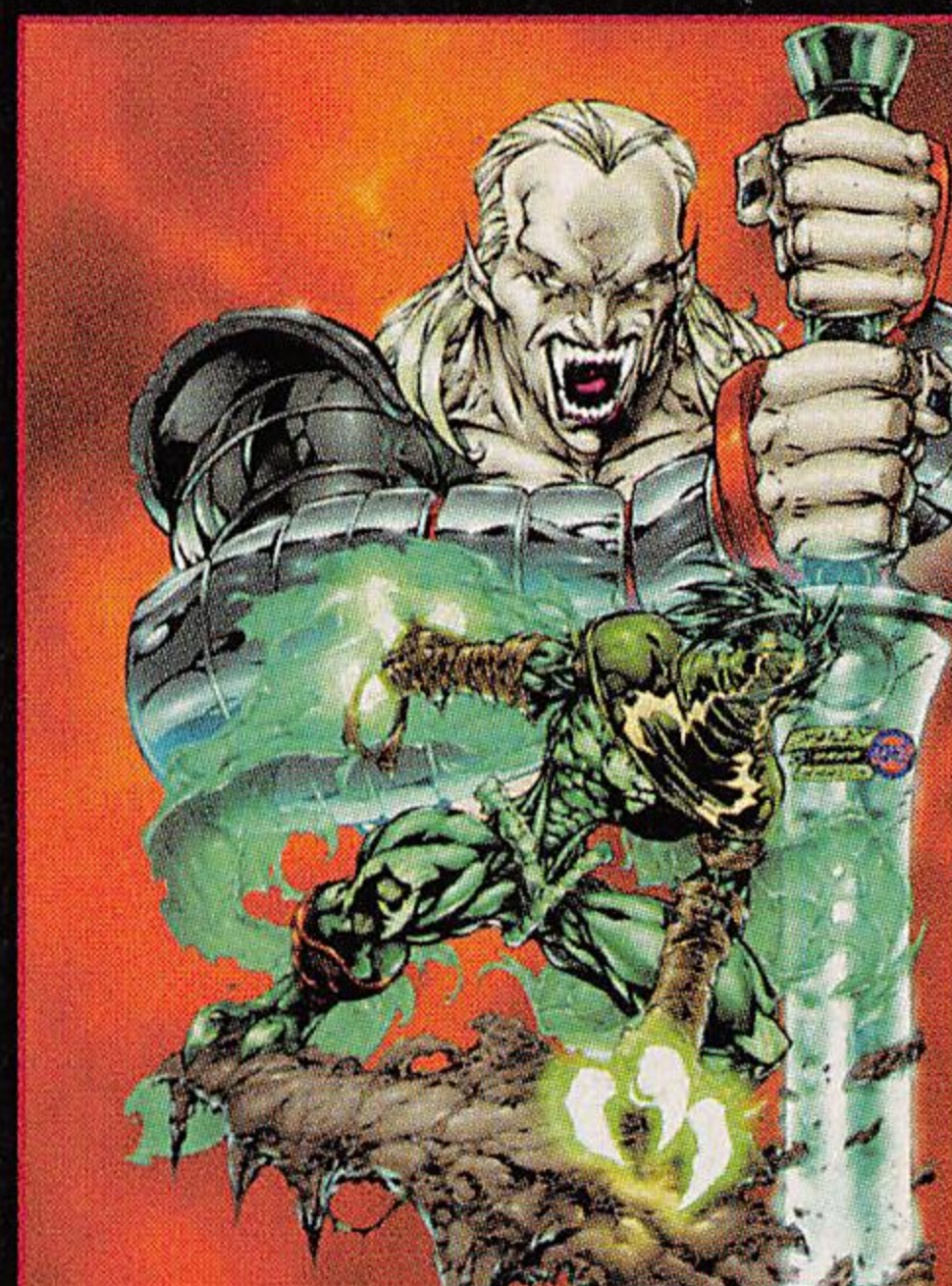
▲ Ken sent us a bunch of great sketches, each with a completely different approach. The only thing we told him was that we needed to showcase both Kain and Raziel, and that they're arch enemies.



▲ The first sketch was great, but would have been tough to fit on our cover (especially Kain's arm). This second sketch would have fit perfectly, but *man*, we sure loved the more action-style poses of the first sketch.



▲ Sketch number three was the winner, with great action poses that featured both characters well. It also conveyed that the two were enemies, since they're at each others' throats (no pun intended).



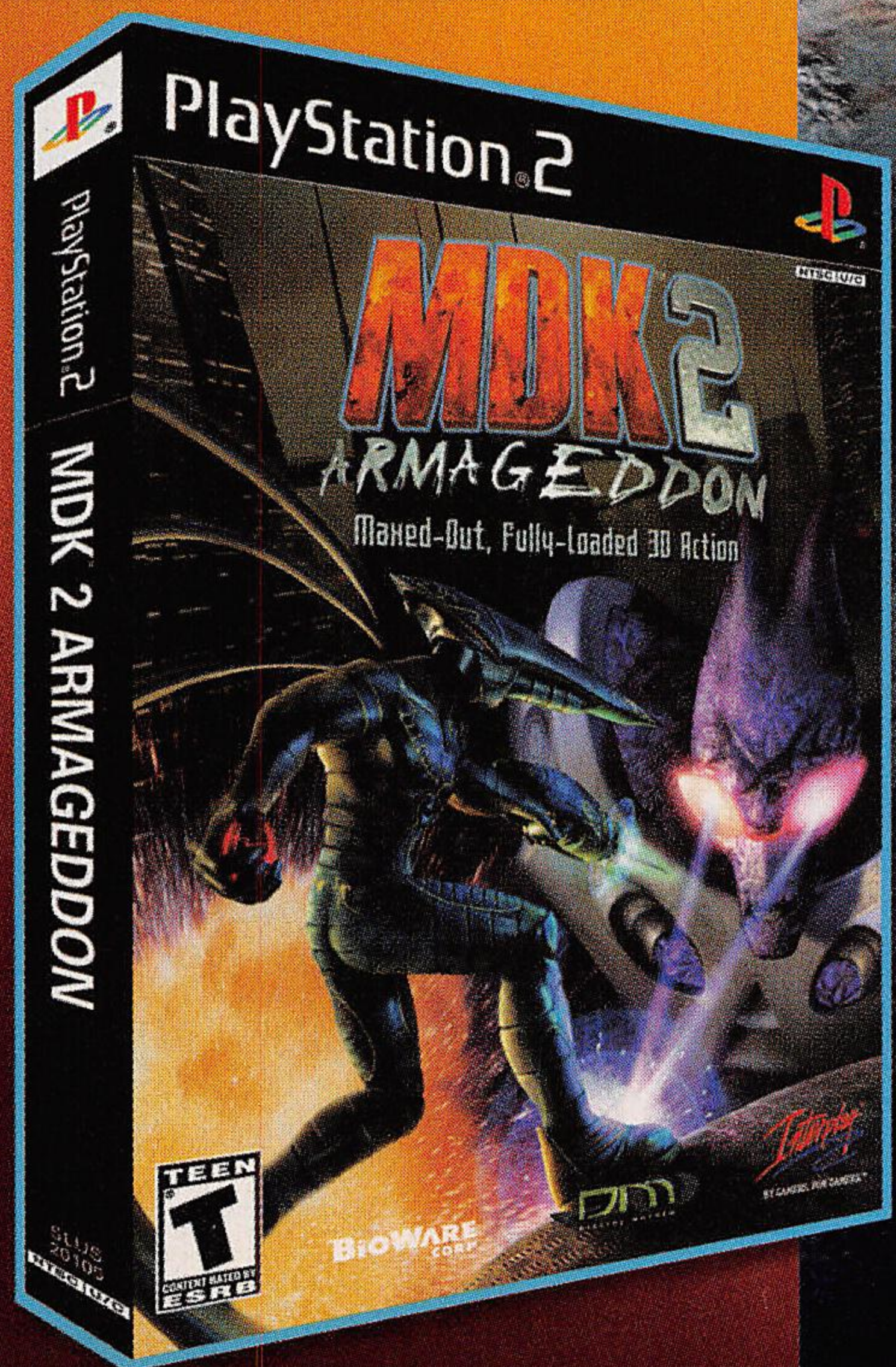
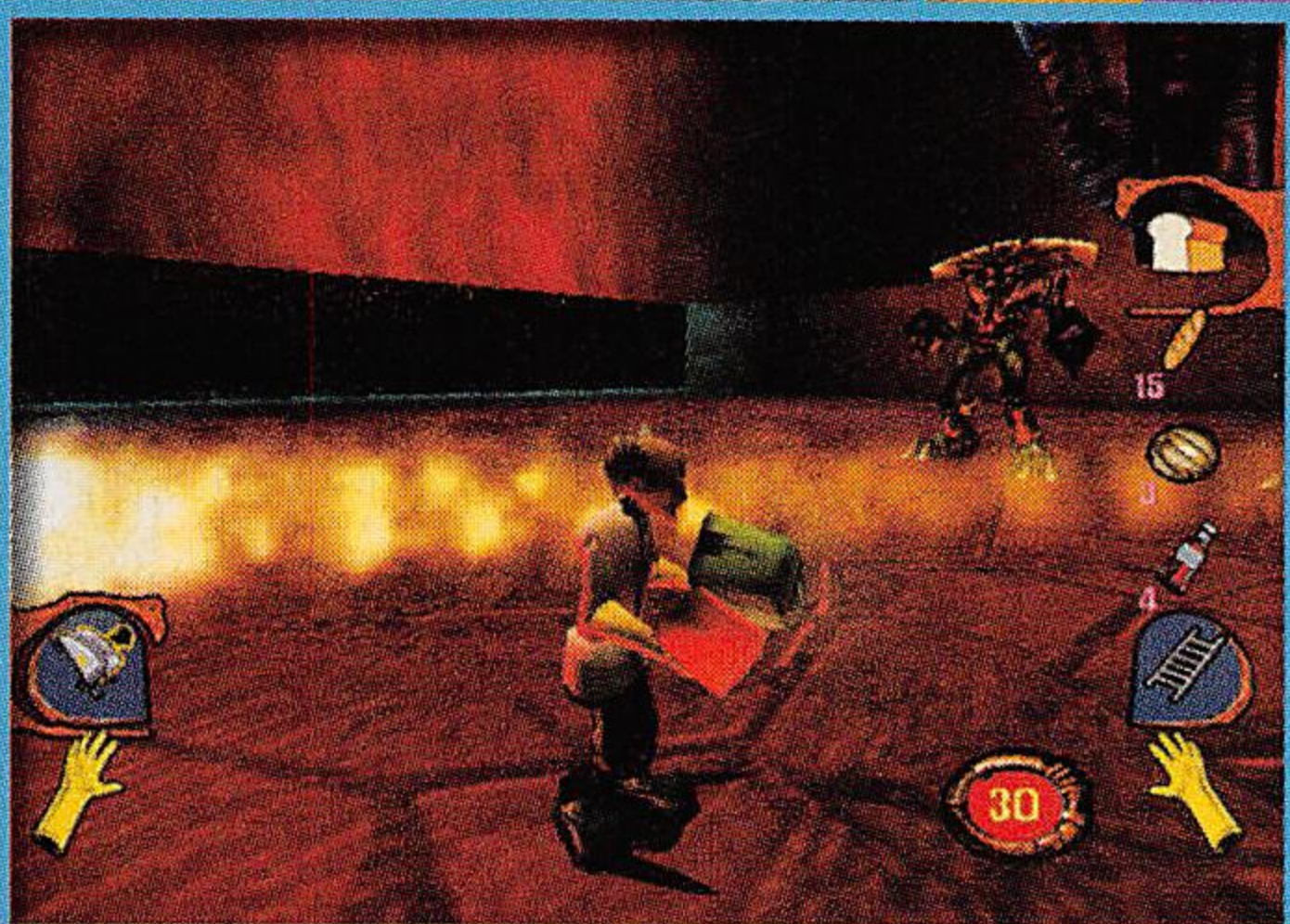
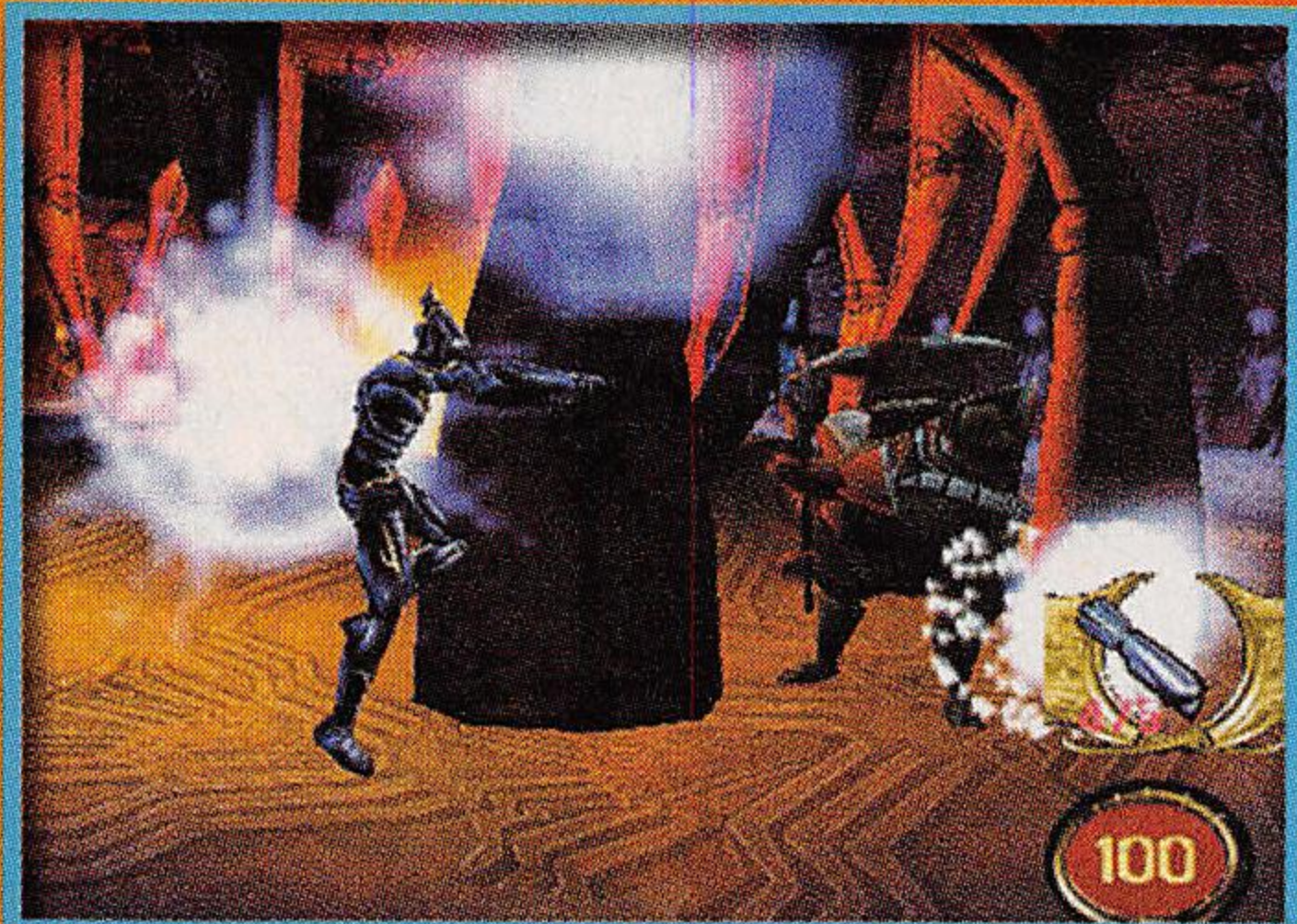
▲ For the final version, Ken shortened up Kain's shoulder armor to get it away from the cover text, and made his face all mean and fangy. He even threw in a fiery background, although it's only used on the TOC.

WITH ENEMIES LIKE THIS...





...WHO NEEDS



TARGET PRACTICE!



MDK2 ARMAGEDDON, a high-energy mix of intense action, stealth, brain teasing challenges, hi-tech gadgets and offbeat humor no gamer should miss. This next-generation sequel packs more twists and turns than a corkscrew roller coaster.

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Animated Blood

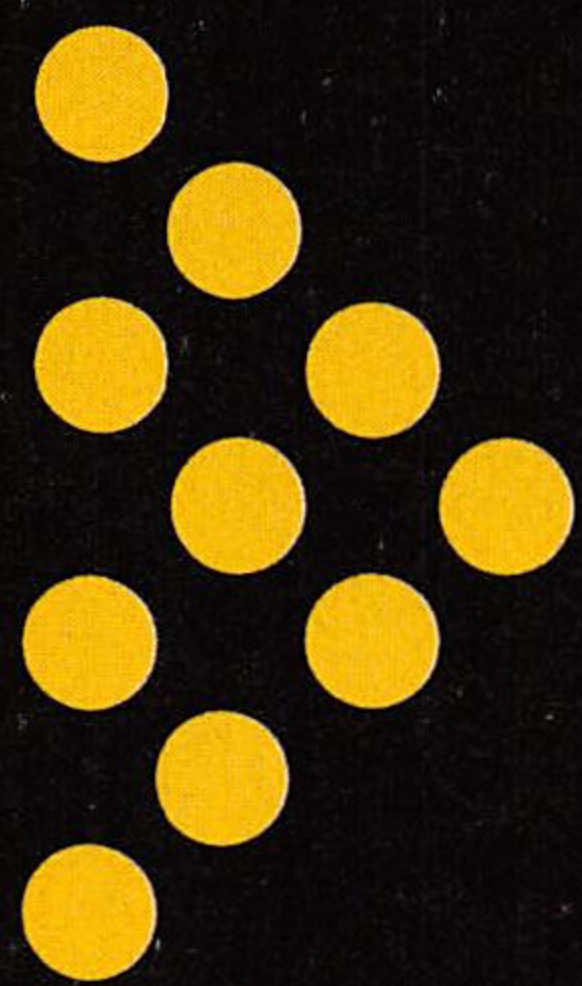
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MAIN MENU

100% INDEPENDENT PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE ► ISSUE 44 APRIL 2001 ► VOL. 5



46

► Reinventing the Fighting Game

SPECIAL FEATURE:

Fighting games used to rule the videogame industry, but no more. What went wrong, and what will it take to get fighters back on top?



30

► Fear Effect 2: Retro Helix

This game is just SICK. Unless you enjoy half-naked babes and gore, you don't wanna turn over to page 30. Hey, where'd everyone go...?



82

► Twisted Metal Black

This is another sick game. For the PS2, the series is getting back to its dark roots, and we're loving it. Don't miss the latest screens!



34

► Shadow of Destiny

We wouldn't have thought an adventure game where you don't kill anybody could be this fun. It's the sleeper hit of the season!

SECTIONS

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16 ► TOP STORY

Sega's biggest games headed over to PlayStation 2 and PSOne? We know it sounds too good to be true, but this is no April Fools' joke! It's the story of the year, and you HAVE to check it out!

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24 ► Q&A

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REVIEWS ► 29

Our Game of the Month is *Fear Effect 2: Retro Helix*, which is the most mature title we've ever seen on PlayStation. For all the steamy details, check out page 29!

44 ► SCOREBOARD

PREVIEWS ► 51

Our usual truckload of big new games for your perusal, including two massive titles from the Legacy of Kain series, *Blood Omen II* and *Soul Reaver II*. Hot stuff!

STRATEGY ► 85

This month we show you how to solve the pain-in-the-ass puzzles in *Fear Effect 2* and whoop ass in *Oni*, plus we give you advanced trick and track tips for ATV.

LETTERS ► 96

If there's one thing we love more than playing hot new games, it's opening thousands of letters every month! Really!

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102 ► FAN ART

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RESET ► 105

Your early sneak-peek at what's gonna be hot for next issue.

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PSM

PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE

Blood Omen 2 Soul Reaver 2

Ready for some
bloodthirsty
vampire mayhem? We've got
two of the year's biggest
sequels right here under one
roof! Check out our interview
with the *Blood Omen 2* team
on page 24, then turn to page
52 for eye-gouging screens!

24, 52

THE PSM MISSION STATEMENT

PSM is the magazine for the gaming Elite — the hardcore gamers that support and drive this industry. This is **NOT** a "mass-market" magazine. We don't focus on "fun for the whole family", or waste space interviewing movie stars that have nothing to do with games. That's just not what we're into.

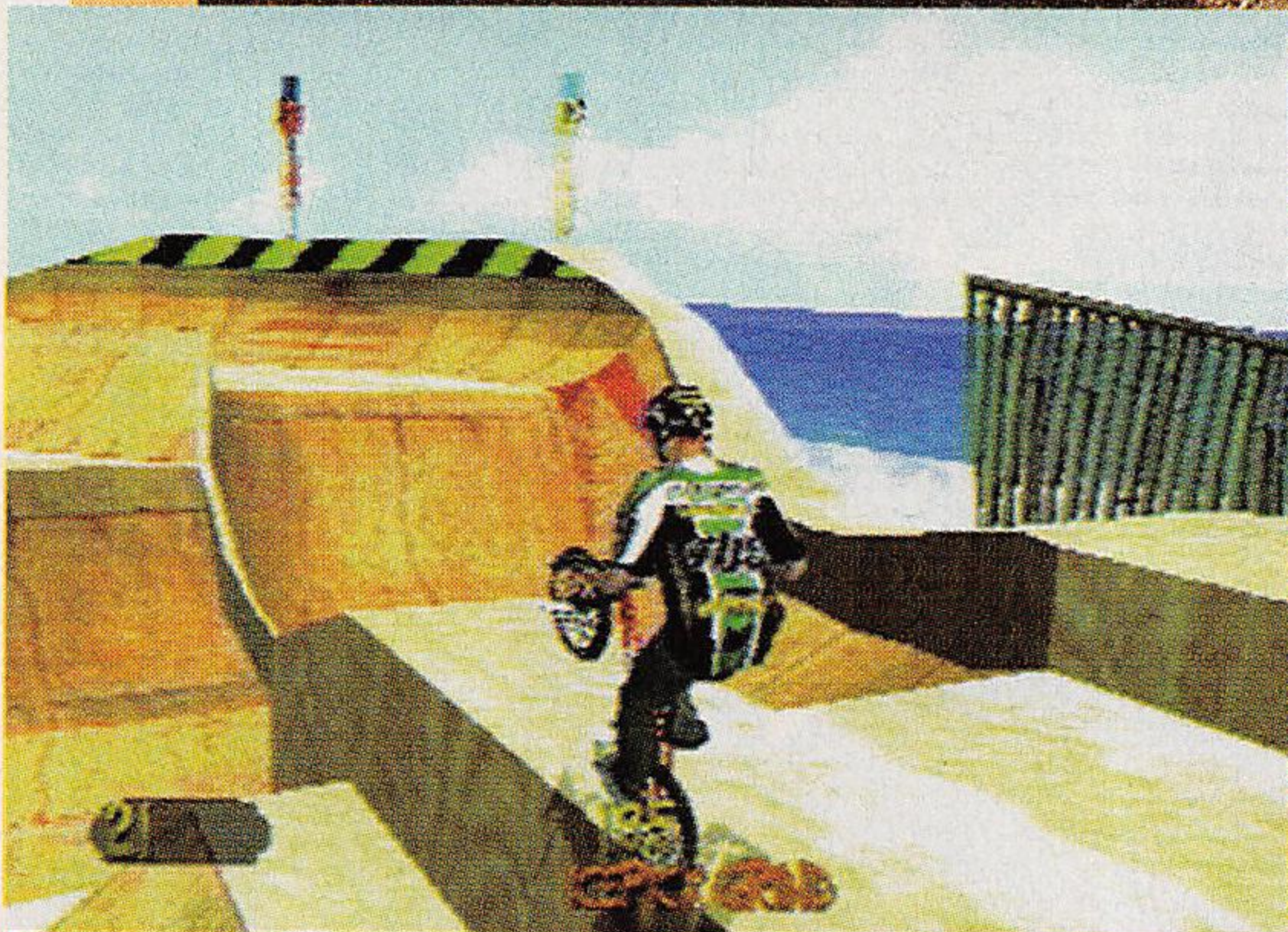
PSM is also proudly independent. We have no official corporate sponsor, so you can trust that our reviews and opinions will always be 100% our own. Our readers always come first, and we would never, **EVER** betray your trust. This is our promise to you, the hardcore PlayStation gamer, who deserves nothing less. Now let's get this issue going!

T.J. Lavin's helpful hints on backyard landscaping.

1. Kill all living plants and lawn
2. Truck in dirt
3. Build huge jumps
4. Watch for signs of stray flowers
5. Kill stray flowers
6. Truck in more dirt
7. Build bigger jumps



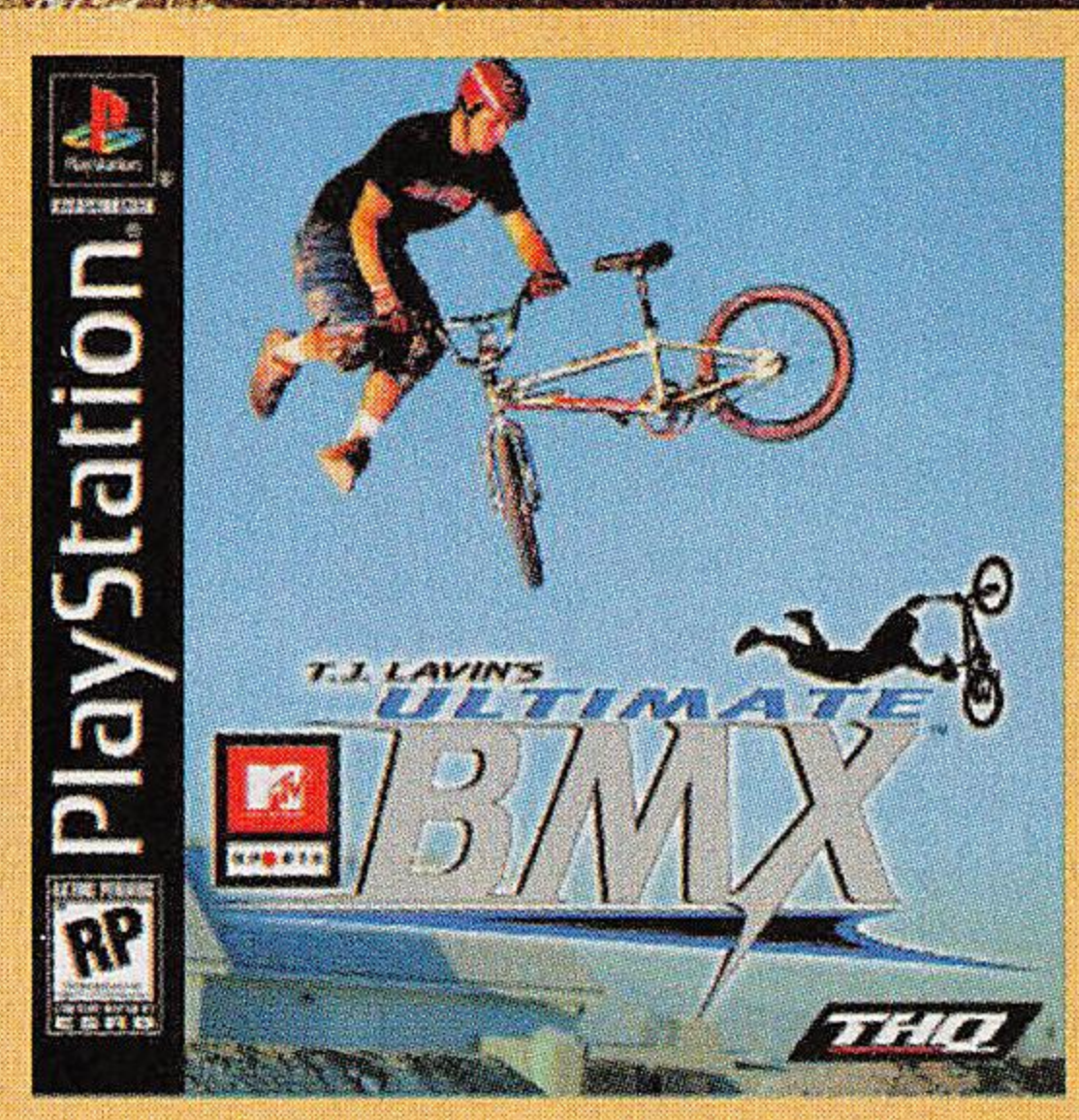
1000's of Real BMX Trick Combos



Huge Dirt, Street and Vert levels



Unique Evolutionary Playfield



GAME BOY
COLOR



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Featured Riders:

T.J. Lavin
Fuzzy Hall
Jamie Bestwick
Colin Winkelmann
Brian Foster
Chris Doyle
Mike Ardelean
Dave Freimuth
Chris Duncan
Matt Beringer

Music By:

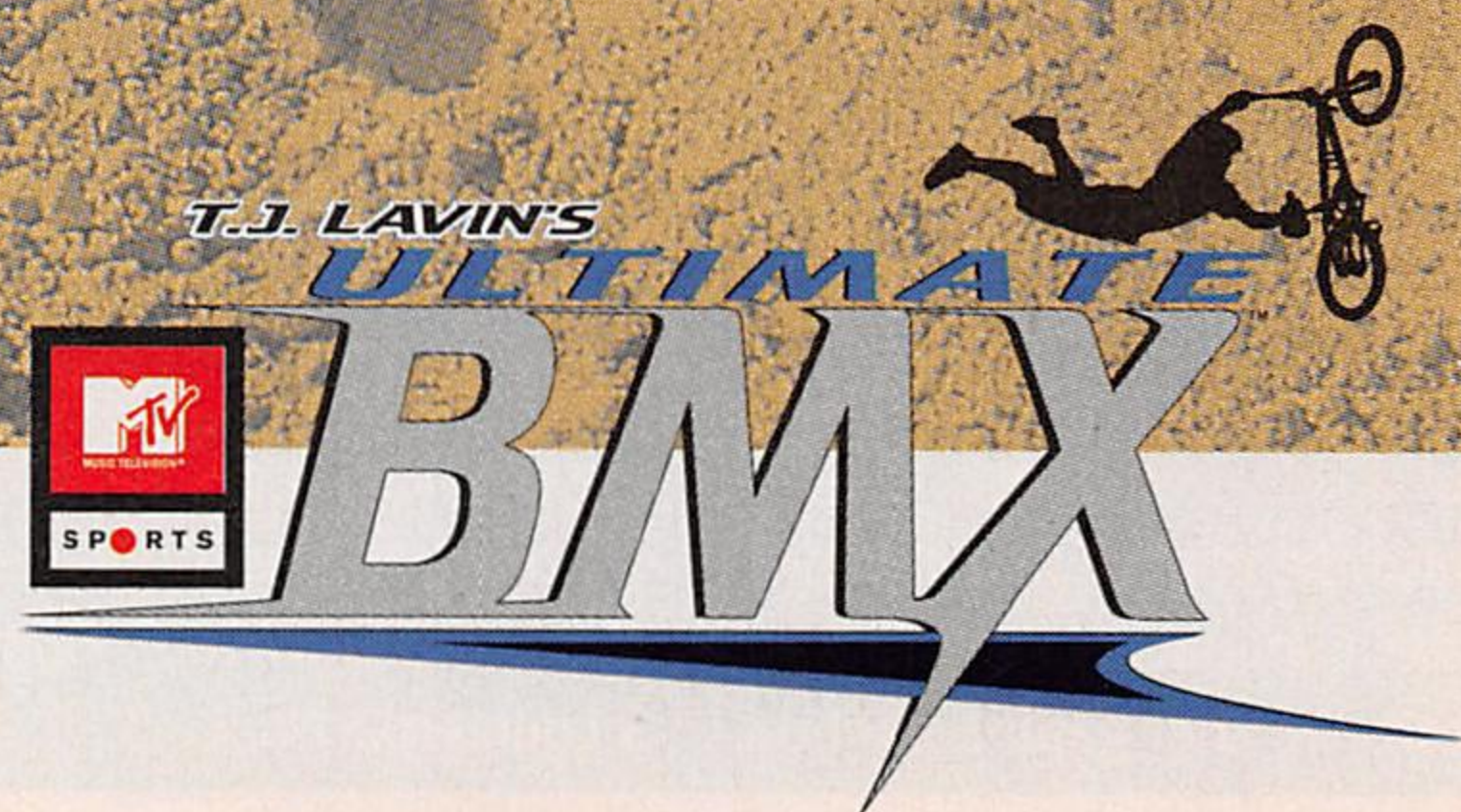
Kottonmouth Kings
P.O.D.
SR-71
Ghoul spoon
Millencollin
Frenzal Rhomb
UXB
187
Hotwire
Unwritten Law

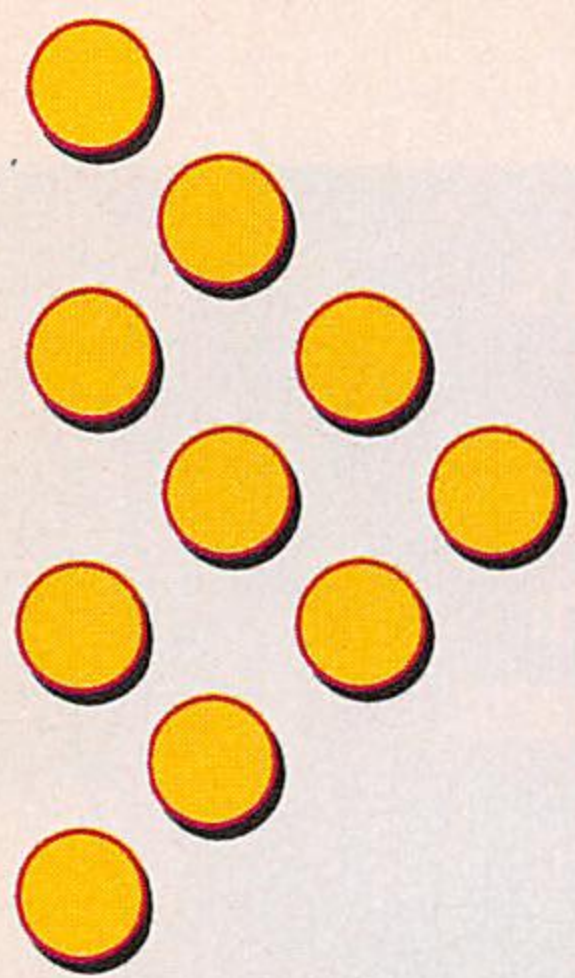
2000 Gravity Games Gold Medallist
2 Time X-Games Champion
2 Time King of Dirt

T.J. Lavin's actual backyard



www.thq.com





MONITOR

Your inside look at this month's hot topics, gear, and games

SEGA SHOCKER!

Virtua Fighter 4, Space Channel 5, and more are headed to PS2, baby!



We know what you're thinking, but trust us, this isn't some kind of April Fool's joke.

During a teleconference held on January 30, Sega delivered the earth-shaking announcement that it was discontinuing its Dreamcast system and will instead focus purely on making games for multiple platforms — including PS2 and PSone. While the news is certainly unfortunate for Dreamcast owners in the long run, it is huge news for PS2 owners and gamers in general who will now get to experience the fruits of one of the world's leading game makers.

Even though rumors about Sega's move onto PS2 had been circulating for months, the official word sent shockwaves through the videogame industry. Big third-parties — Electronic Arts in particular — will now face some serious competition from Sega's 800-person-strong game development force. While some are shrugging off the threat by pointing at Sega's inexperience on the PS2 hardware, we can only hope that they are a little bit scared,

because that fear will make them work even harder to ensure that their games are absolutely as good as possible in the face of Sega's efforts.

So, what about the games? Despite the fact that Sega has been a bitter rival of Sony's since the dawn of the 32-bit era, that isn't keeping it from bringing some of its biggest series to its now ex-competitor's system. First and foremost is *Virtua Fighter 4*, the latest in Sega's flagship fighting game series that introduced the world to polygonal brawlers. The arcade version of *VF4*, which will run on Sega's own Naomi 2 coin-op hardware, hadn't been revealed before this issue went to press, but there is still some preliminary info to be had (see below).

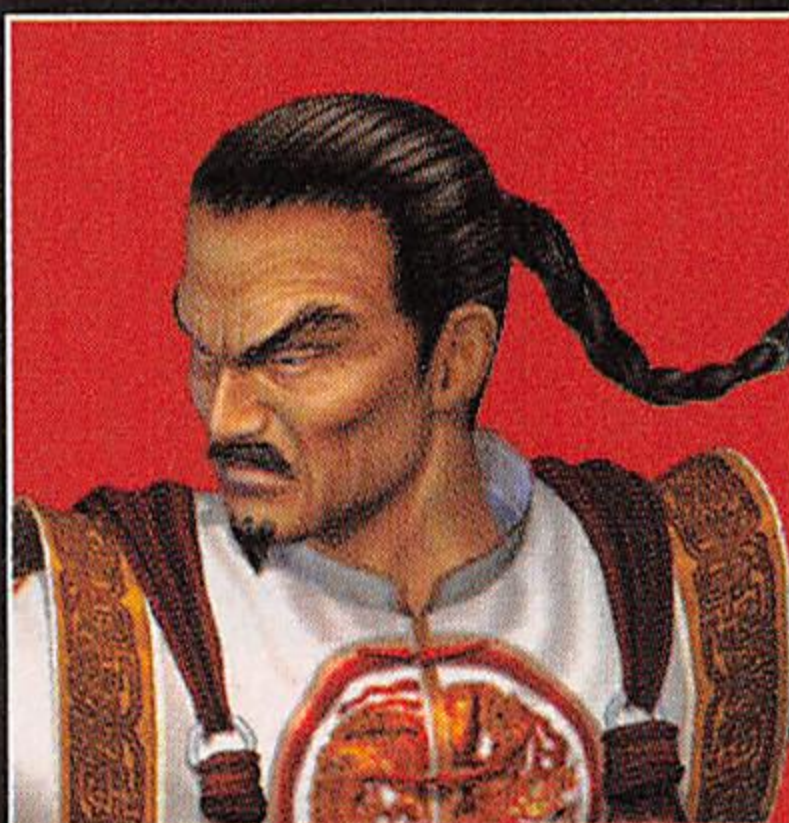
As it currently stands, *VF4* is only slated to appear on PS2 for the home, but Sega is still keeping its options open. One big factor in favor of PS2 exclusivity is that the home version of *VF4* has been designed from the ground up specifically for the system by the arcade version's development team — so, if anything, it'd have to be ported to other consoles. Sega doesn't expect to show the PS2 version of *VF4* until this year's E3 show in May, but we'll have details on the arcade version following its unveiling at the AOU arcade expo in Japan on February 23.

Also on tap from Sega is a port of its Dreamcast dancing action game *Space Channel 5*. Similar in concept to games like

VIRTUA REALITY

Series director Yu Suzuki has commented that *VF4* will be far more cinematic than its predecessors and may allow free 3D movement within its environments without the use of a side-step button. There's also the chance that environment interaction will play a role in the game, as he's

said that there'll be other ways to defeat enemies that directly punching and kicking them. Subtle details, such as footprints in snow will also be included and the character models promise to represent a huge leap over their *Virtua Fighter 3* counterparts.



▲ **LAU** — Check out the amount of detail in his clothing!



▲ **PAI** — The way her sleeves bend around her arms is amazing.



▲ **AKIRA** — These are actual models, not renders. Nice hair...

NOTES

MGS2 GOES PLASTIC

Renowned toy maker McFarlane Toys has revealed that it will be making action figures based on Konami's upcoming *Metal Gear Solid 2*. Evidently, its work with figures based on the original *Metal Gear Solid* was enough to land it the job this time around as well. No further information has been released regarding the toy line just yet, but we expect to get our first look at the figures at this year's Toy Fair in mid-February.

75 MILLION POLYS A SECOND!

Sony has revealed a successor to the Graphics Synthesizer processor used in PlayStation 2 that is capable of rendering 75 million polygons per second. The processor boasts a massive 32 megabytes of DRAM for an on-chip cache and has internal 2,000-bit data paths capable of transmitting 42 gigabytes of data per second. Sony won't comment on this chip's intended applications, although it'll likely be used to generating high-end images for movies and simulations.

GRAB YOUR GARLIC

Namco is well into development on its latest System 246 (PS2-powered) arcade title, *Vampire Night*. This lightgun shooter pits players against blood-suckers instead of *Time Crisis*-style bad guys and supports up to two simultaneous players. There's no word on a PS2 port yet. Namco is also working with Capcom on a *Res Evil* lightgun game for arcades, but its release seems a little less certain for PS2.

INTERNET MECHS

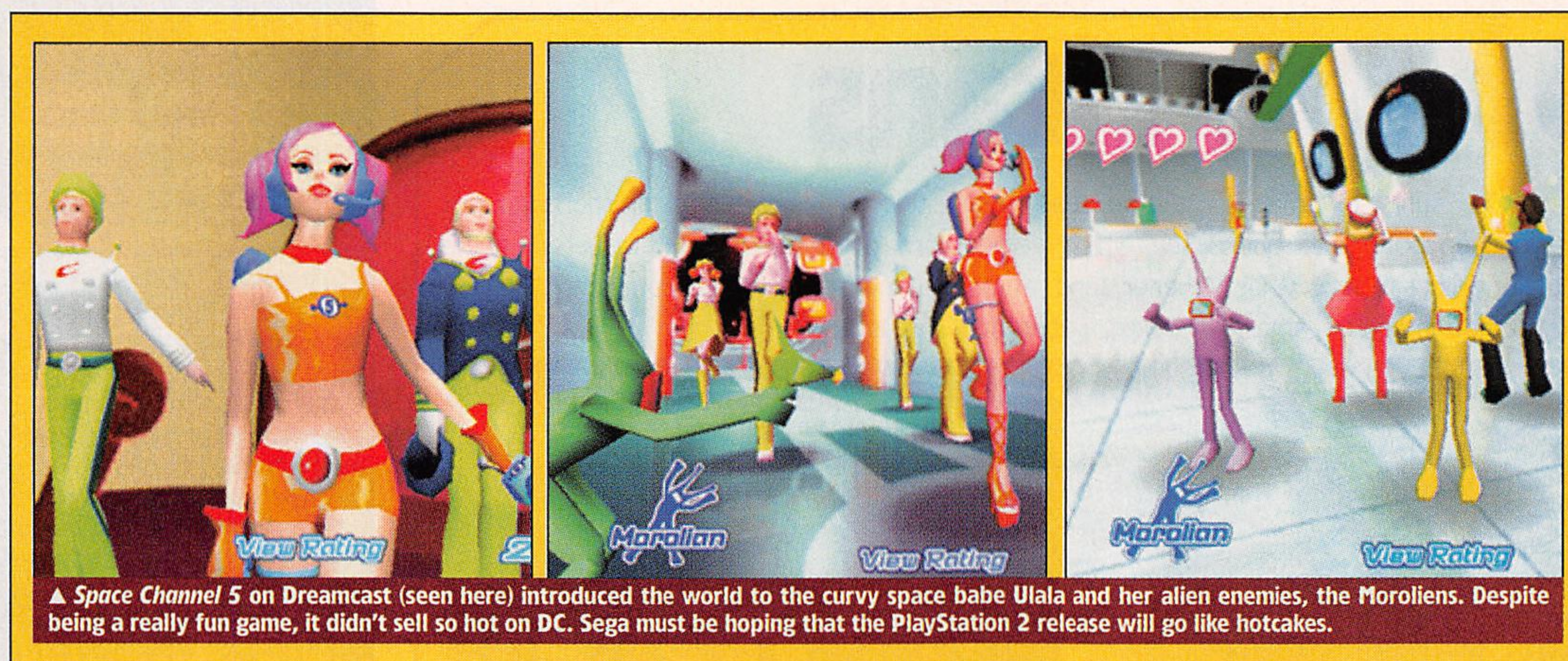
From Software is one of the first game companies to jump on the PS2 modern bandwagon in Japan. *Armored Core 2: Another Age* will enable players to go one-on-one, thanks to modems with Conexant's new PS2-compatible USB technology. Agetec is bringing the game stateside this year, but there's no word whether the online option will remain intact.

PS2 BROADBAND GETS CLOSER

SCEI is partnering with Japanese phone company NTT to begin preliminary tests on its proposed fiber-optic broadband network. The tests, which are limited to 62 lucky users, will run through March 26 and feature downloadable movies, music, games and other content. The results of these tests will hopefully reveal that Sony's online plans are plausible — and not still years from fruition.

LICENSES TO THRILL

Infogrames has snagged the rights to three entertainment properties — *Men In Black 2*, *La Femme Nikita*, and *Peanuts* — and all may see release on PSone and PS2. More on all of them as it breaks.



▲ *Space Channel 5* on Dreamcast (seen here) introduced the world to the curvy space babe Ulala and her alien enemies, the Morolians. Despite being a really fun game, it didn't sell so hot on DC. Sega must be hoping that the PlayStation 2 release will go like hotcakes.

Parappa the Rapper, this fully 3D, '70s style space opera combines dancing and shooting with groovy backgrounds and colorful characters. Reports in the Japanese press also state that Sega is planning to bring the sequel to *Space Channel 5* to PS2, but Sega of America has yet to make an official statement. In Japan, Sega will be bringing two games from its popular *Let's Make a Sports Team*

series to PS2, along with a yet undetermined game in the *Sakura Wars* series of RPGs. Localization guru Working Designs has expressed interest in bringing the latter stateside, but as of now all three are tagged as Japan-only.

As part of the announcement, Sega also confirmed that PS2 versions of its popular NFL and NBA games are likely (see page 18). Additionally, it will port its ►

PSM'S SEGA WISH LIST

We're all huge Sega fans from back in the day, and we've each got our own series or games we'd like to see brought to PS2. Here's a look at a few of our top picks.



1. Sonic the Hedgehog

This one's a no-brainer. Who wouldn't want to see the spiny blue guy's further exploits (*Sonic Adventure 3*?) on PS2? We'll pass on *Sonic Shuffle 2* though, thanks.



2. Panzer Dragoon

Shooter or RPG, either would be fine by us. Even though Team Andromeda (the series creator) is no more, we're sure some top-flight talent could be put onto the series.

3. Shinobi

We're not talking *Tenchu* rip-off here — we'd like to see a faithful all-action game



based on this Ninja classic. It could even be side-scrolling, as long as some cool 3D elements came into play.



4. Outrun

Here's a series that's just begging for resurrection. *Ridge Racer*'s pretty much alone on PS2 in the arcade racing sub-genre, and we're sure Sega's unique route-based series could give it some competition.



5. Streets of Rage

Beat-'em-ups are another genre that has fallen by the wayside, and this was one of the best series of them all. Make it 3D, keep the cool visual style, beef up the gameplay and show the *Bouncer* team what's what!



▲ *SC5*'s Ulala proves once again that in the outer reaches of the galaxy, everyone dresses in retro-70s clothes. We guess it makes it easier to start dancing when the aliens attack... or something...

Clash Of The Titans

Another huge aspect of Sega's mega-announcement is that its acclaimed lineup of sports titles — which includes the stunning *NFL2K* and *NBA2K* franchises — will likely appear on PS2 in time for their 2K3 incarnations in the fall of 2002. This means that developer Visual Concepts will be going head-to-head against EA Sports' legendary *Madden NFL* and *NBA Live* series,

which is sure to make everyone on both sides pull out all the stops to show what they can do in sports games.

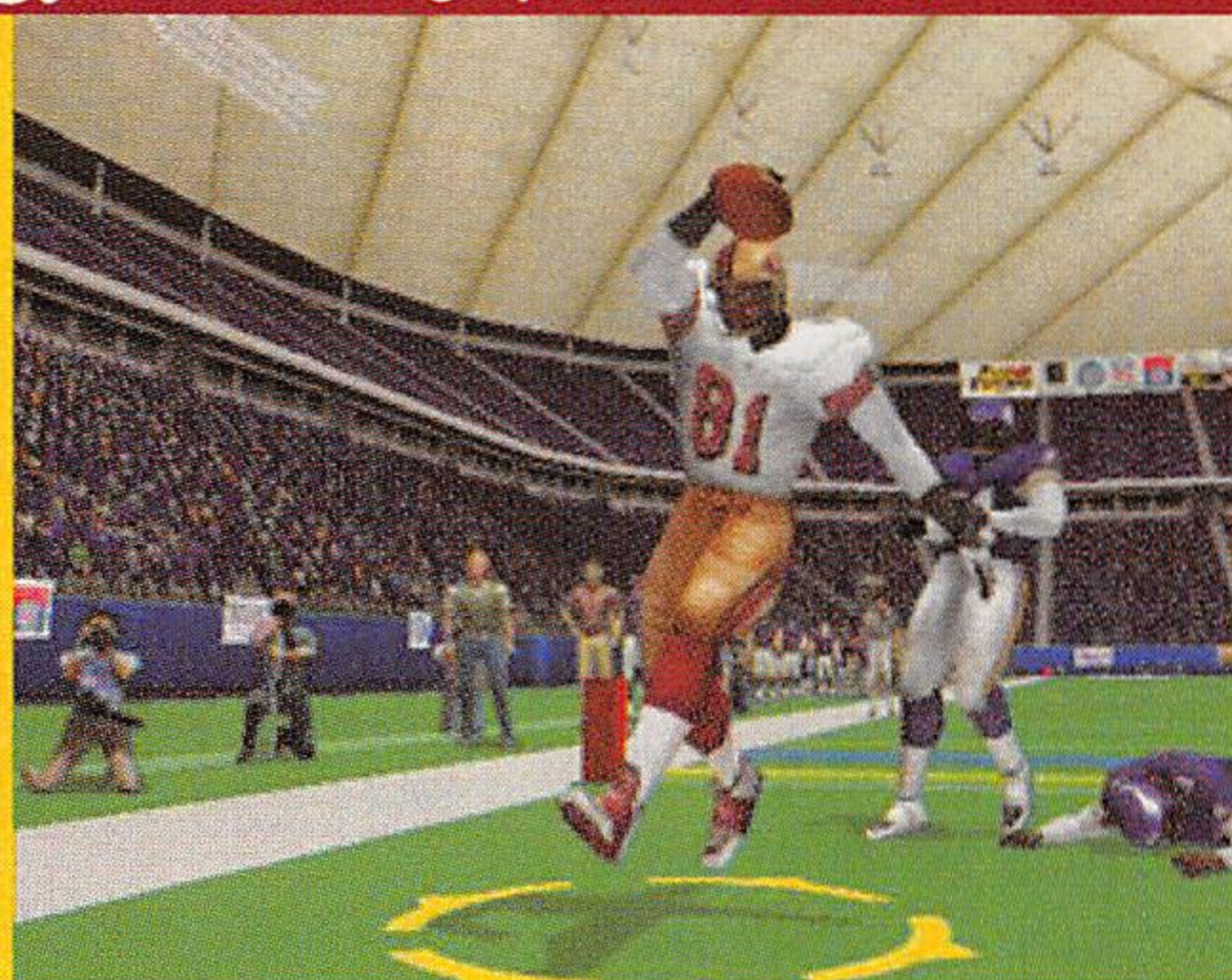
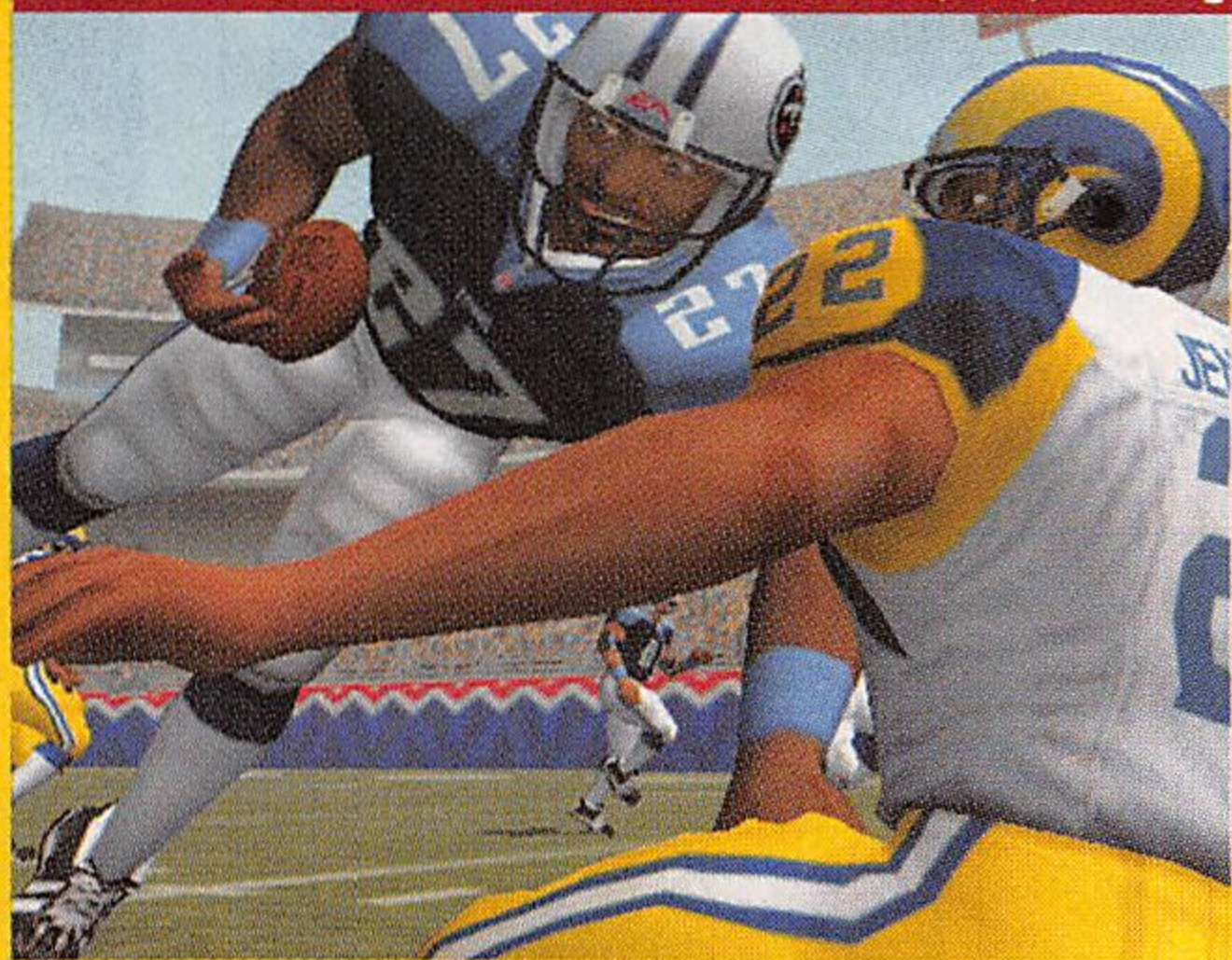
It'll be really interesting to see which games turn out better (and which sell more copies), but overall, this is a

great turn for sports gamers no matter which version of the game they prefer.

▼ Electronic Arts *Madden NFL 2001* (PS2)

VS.

▼ Sega Sports *NFL 2001* (DC)



► development tools, code-named Ninja and Shinobi, to PS2 in order to enable third-party developers to bring their Dreamcast products to PS2 with relative ease. Additional PS2 game announcements from Sega of America are confirmed to be forthcoming, and we expect full disclosure of its long-term plans to be unveiled at E3. Sega of Japan, for its part, has finally confirmed that Acclaim holds the license to release ports of its Dreamcast games *Crazy Taxi*, *Zombie Revenge*, *18 Wheeler American Trucker* for PS2, but Acclaim is remaining silent on the subject for now.

On the PSone front, Sega plans to port more than one of its popular Sega Saturn games to the system, but isn't saying which ones as of yet. Word in Japan is that *Sonic Jam*, a collection of 16-bit *Sonic the*

Hedgehog games is among them, as is the epic RPG *Panzer Dragoon Saga*, but these are as of yet unconfirmed. We'll have lots more details as they become available.

This news also affects Sony's online plans for PS2, as well as Sega's existing online gaming business. SegaNet, the network which currently enables Dreamcast owners to play games like *Quake III* against each other via the Internet, will be expanded to support PS2 (and presumably other consoles) as modern technology becomes available for it. In Japan, Sega and Sony are even looking to partner with each other on network-compatible games, and Sony has apparently welcomed Sega's experience in establish-

ing an online gaming network (which it may incorporate in its own broadband strategy) with open arms.

All told, this is indeed huge news for PS2 and PSone fans that will obviously develop as the months progress and more big games are announced by Sega. Now, why don't you go try and find our *real* April Fool's joke?

WHAT YOU SHOULD BE PLAYING

1. Fear Effect 2

Don't just play for the T&A — it's also an awesome action-packed adventure.

2. Shadow Of Destiny

Konami's latest is a murder mystery like no other you've played before.

3. Onimusha

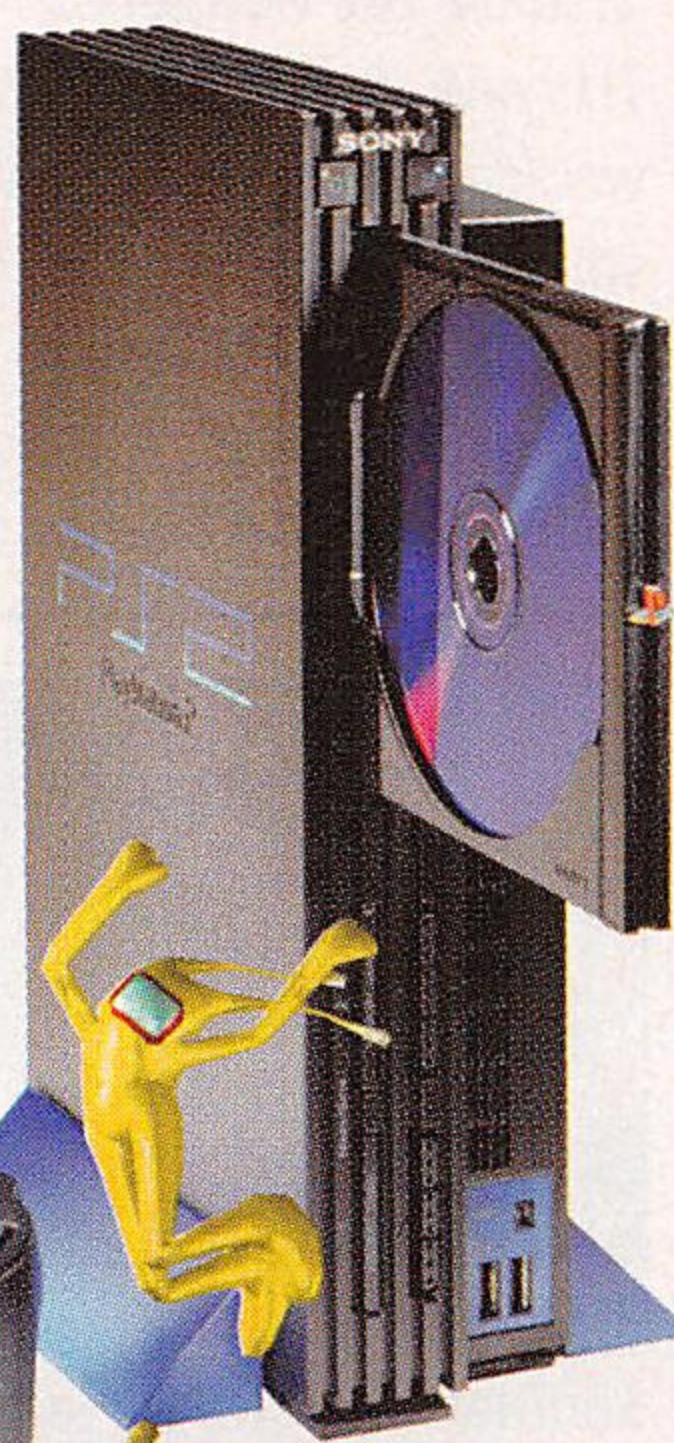
If you haven't played this big-budget adventure yet, you're missing out.

4. Star Wars Starfighter

You'll feel like you're in *Episode I*, only you'll probably be a better actor.

5. Ring Of Red

Strategy games aren't that common anymore, and this is one of the best.



RUMORS

by BlueLED

Another month, another batch of fine malt rumors for my peeps.

SOLID SNAKE'S FINAL MISSION?

Say it ain't so! Word out of my boys in Tokyo is that *Metal Gear Solid 2* will mark the final chapter in the *Metal Gear* storyline. Sure, there'll be an Xbox *MGS* game, but it's the PS2 sequel that'll supposedly wrap it all up. Does this mean we've seen the last of Snake? Trust me, if *MGS2* sells well (and why wouldn't it?) Konami will do another one, but Kojima-san will probably move onto other things.

SEGA SQUARED

Seems like Sony isn't the only big company that Sega's partnering with following its recent diversification move. Company bigwigs are quietly hinting at a team-up with none other than Square. But it gets even more interesting. The rumor continues that one of Sega's famous AM teams is working with Square on a top secret arcade project. The first assumption would be that this is a version of *Final Fantasy XI* that can be played from the arcades, but the rumor also has it that this game will only be able to be played in arcades.

HIGH CALIBUR E3

My sources tell me that we can expect *Soul Calibur 2* to make its playable debut on PS2 at this May's mega-huge game expo in L.A. The press will probably get a peek at the game before then, and my pals in Japan will see it at AOU and Tokyo Game Show, but when it comes to hands-on play, it looks like E3 will be the place to be.

PS2 PRICE DROP ALREADY?

You heard that right, but not in the U.S. just yet. This rumor is all about the Japanese PS2, which my sources tell me will drop by 10,000 yen (nearly 100 bucks) around the one year anniversary of the system's Asian launch on March 4. If Sony sticks to the same one-year timing for a price cut on this side of the Pacific, we can expect a \$199 PS2 here just in time to go toe-to-toe with those suckas at Microsoft and their big-ass Xbox.

TEKKEN IT TO THE MASSES

Another big fighter that's set to make a big splash at E3 is *Tekken 4*, or so is the buzz along the grapevine. Unlike *Soul Calibur 2*, this one isn't supposed to be playable, but rather will appear only on video. Still, if Namco's promise of radically different gameplay is to be believed, it'll be a real sight to see.

NAMCO ROLIS OUT ON PS2

The interesting looking *7: The Calvary Malmorth* isn't the only RPG Namco has cooking for PS2. The long-time Sony supporter is also hard at work on a new game in its *Tales Of* series for the 128-bit beast. *Tales of Phantasia* and *Tales of Destiny* were to games in the series for PlayStation and sold hugely in Japan, so I've got high hopes for what the series will do on PS2.

Square Drops More Bombs

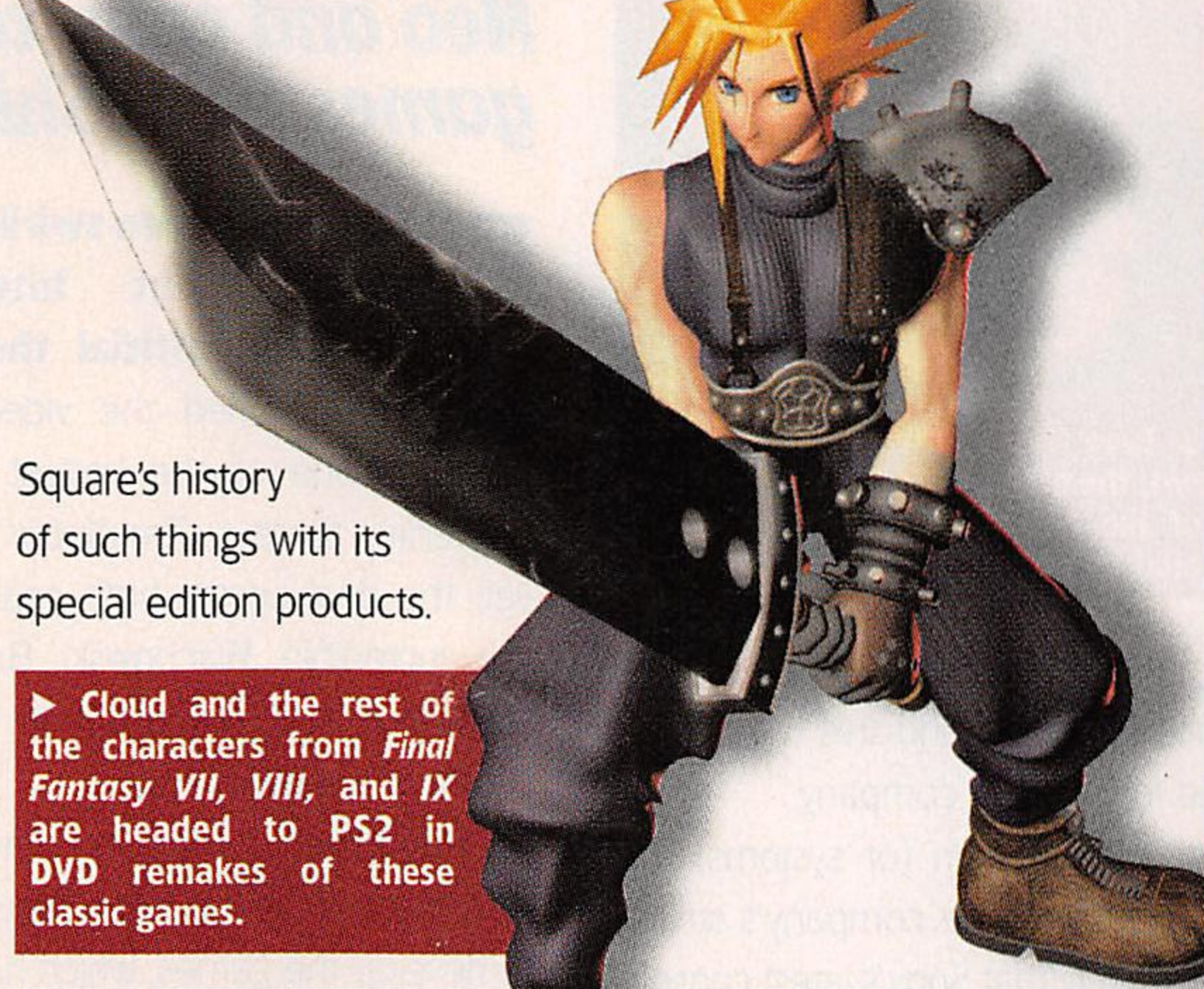
Even more PS2 Final Fantasy goodness on the way!

Last month came first info on *Final Fantasy X*, and now Square has taken the lid off four more *FF* titles, three of which are already confirmed for PS2. The biggest of the four anticipation wise is undoubtedly *Final Fantasy XI*, which is destined for a yet undetermined system, but PS2 is definitely in the running and will likely be Square's first (if not only) choice when the game arrives in 2002. Unlike *FFXI*, it's being designed as a more "traditional" offline RPG.

Also in the works are remakes of *Final Fantasy VII*, *VIII*, and *IX* for PS2, each of which will be released separately on DVD-ROM. Square's not saying yet what enhancements we can expect for these games, but PSM has previously

learned that the company already has high-resolution character models and DVD-quality Dolby Digital cinema footage at the ready. All three games are on target for 2001 release in Japan.

Finally, we can expect Square to make a special edition version of *Final Fantasy X* available alongside the normal version which it hits the street in Japan this July. This "director's cut" of sorts will span two DVDs instead of one and will feature anamorphic graphics optimized for wide-screen televisions and Dolby Digital 5.1 sound. It will be a limited run product, but Square hasn't said yet just how limited it will actually be. It's not beyond reason to expect some extra goodies in the set given



Square's history of such things with its special edition products.

► Cloud and the rest of the characters from *Final Fantasy VII*, *VIII*, and *IX* are headed to PS2 in DVD remakes of these classic games.

Sega & Sony Team For New Console

DreamStation to be "lots bigger" than Microsoft's Xbox

Forget Dreamcast and PlayStation 2 — at least that's what the guys at Sega and Sony are doing now that they've started working together. Instead, these two game industry giants are pooling their console design know-how to take on another literal giant of video game consoles: Microsoft's Xbox.

"We've realized that even with the best software from both our companies, the PS2 can never hope to compare in sheer physical presence to Xbox," said Hironobu Sakai, hardware R&D director at Sony Computer Entertainment. "We need to make a bigger, but not necessarily better, system than

PS2, and that's where DreamStation comes in."

DreamStation will essentially be a PS2 in a 4' by 4' cube, with spare Dreamcast parts and "off the shelf" PC components thrown in to make it heavier and, most importantly, harder to fit into your entertainment system. "We already have just as many developers signed on for DreamStation as PS2," said Sega third-party director Hoku Iranji. "That means everyone Microsoft's got, plus those that make games Japanese players actually care about."

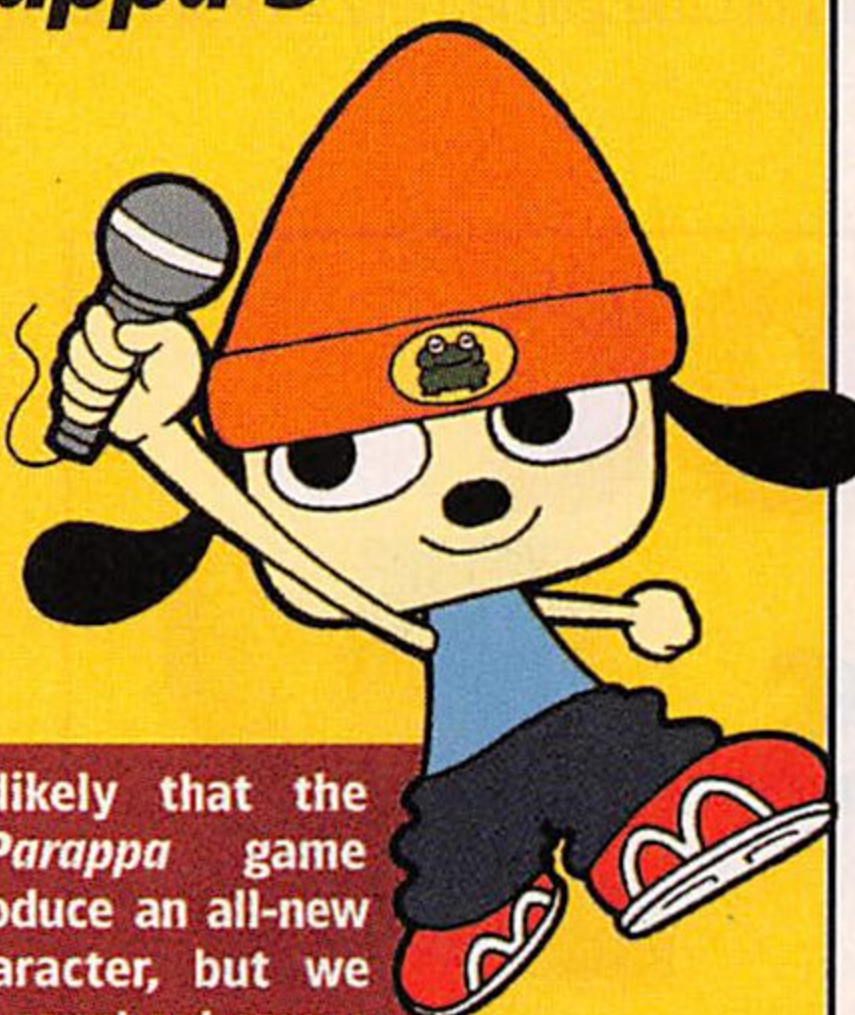
The only thing against DreamStation is that it will never release, since this is an April Fool's joke. :-)



You Gotta Believe!

It's official: Parappa 3 is PS2-bound

Sony recently held a news conference to officially announce a *Parappa the Rapper* cartoon for Japanese television, and it was there that series creator Masaya Matsuura also revealed that a third game in the series (in which Um Jammer Lammy was technically part two) is definitely in



► It's likely that the next *Parappa* game will introduce an all-new lead character, but we wouldn't count out cameo appearances from *Parappa* and *Lammy*.

to go by, don't expect the paper-

development for PlayStation 2. Unfortunately, no other details were provided, but it's still huge news for fans of these awesome — and very quirky — games.

If the transition from *Parappa the Rapper* to *Um Jammer Lammy* is anything

thin rapping puppy to take center stage this time around. If anything, there'll be a new star and a new type of music. Rapping and guitar playing has already been done. What's next — drums or keyboards? We can't wait!

SAY WHAT?

Videogame characters say the darndest things. Here are a few quotes that caught our attention:

"It would become the year I would come to remember with terrible clarity." —Prologue to *Ring of Red*

"My face is up here!" —Hana from *Fear Effect 2*, during just about every conversation she has in the game

"If you're standing, sit down. If you're sitting, stand up. If you're lying down, just ignore me." —Stadium announcer in *Madden NFL 2001*

HITS & MISSES

What's hot and what's not in the gaming world



SEGA ON PS2

Who'da thunk it? Now more than ever, it's clear that PS2 is the place to be for the best games from the biggest companies. We can't wait to see what Sega will cook up after *VF4* and *Space Channel 5*!

THIRD-PARTY MODEMS

Thankfully we won't have to wait until Sony gets its broadband network together to play PS2 games online. They're coming to Japan, but what about here? We expect to hear some announcements at E3.

ENHANCED PC GAMES

We're still a little leery of PC ports to PS2 since they're usually no frills affairs, but games like *Half-Life* and *Giants* are actually getting big visual boosts and exclusive content just for Sony's system.

SONY BOOSTS PS2 OUTPUT

Now that PS2 production has been double to two million a month, shortage woes should be a thing of the past. In fact, by the time you read this, systems should be plentiful — now bring on more big games!

EA'S SEGA BASHING

C'mon guys! Just because Sega hasn't had PS2 dev kits as long as you doesn't mean they don't know how to make great games. It just makes you look scared when you should be focusing on making your own games great.

FAKE NAUGHTY DOG SHOTS

Someone at Sony Europe supposedly sent out "screens" of Naughty Dog's PS2 platformer to the UK press — they turned out to be example renders from a PC program done by some guy in France. D'oh!

MORE PS2 DELAYS IN JAPAN

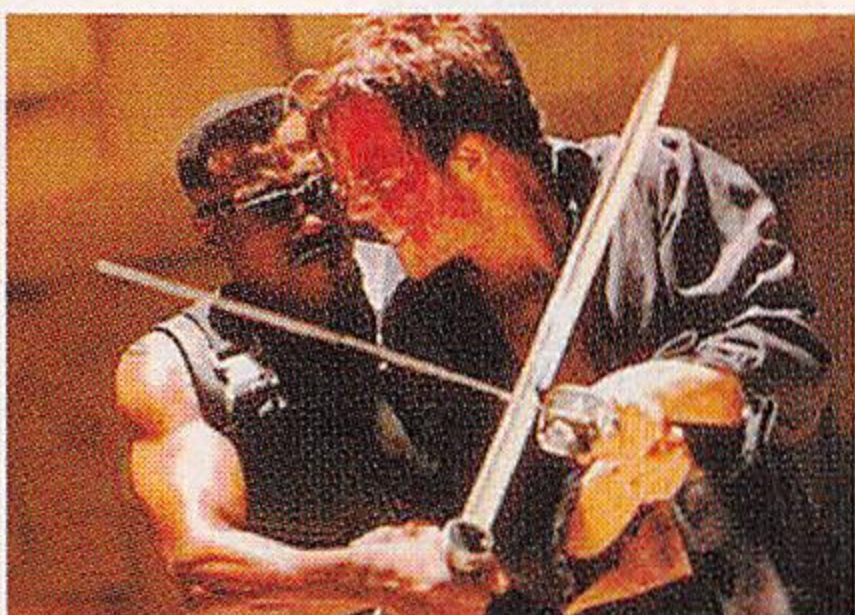
Why is Sony delaying some less anticipated games for quality reasons and rushing bigger ones (like *Dark Cloud*) to market in Japan? Beats us, but hopefully it'll get its agenda straightened out soon.

Blade's Back For Blood

Activision's movie license sequel is likely for PS2

The movie hasn't even hit theaters yet, but Activision has already announced plans to release a next-generation game presumably based on Wesley Snipe's latest film project, *Blade 2: Bloodhunt*. UK-based developer Mucky Foot has been pegged to develop the title since late last year, but the deal wasn't announced until just now. Mucky Foot is best known for developing *Urban Chaos* for Eidos, and this will be the independent contractor's first title for another company.

Activision isn't saying just yet what system (or systems) the *Blade* game will be released for, but given the company's strong commitment to PS2, it would seem likely that Sony's latest console is in the running. The film itself is due out in theaters by the end of the year, so we can only assume that Activision will want to have the interactive treatment ready to rock in time for the all-important holiday season. Expect more details on the game here in PSM as they become available.



▲ Even though the game wasn't so hot, the original *Blade* movie was one of the better comic book to movie adaptations we've seen.

Matrix Games Made Official

Neo and crew to hit PS2 in games from Shiny

Rumors had been swirling for months, but Interplay recently made official the fact that it has landed the videogame rights to one of the hottest movie properties there is: *The Matrix*. Better yet, the deal covers both sequels to the incredible Wachowski Brothers sci-fi flick and will result in games based on them for PS2.

Renowned console and PC developer Shiny has been brought on to develop the games, which have yet to receive any sort of release date.

The films themselves will hit theaters in 2002 and 2003, so it stands to reason that the games will follow suit. Further details are nil at this point, but PSM has heard from sources familiar with the project(s) that at least one of the games will employ technology used in Shiny's two recent PC releases, *Messiah* and *Sacrifice*. Let's hope these games can live up to the movies!



▲ It's been rumored for a long time, but finally *The Matrix* sequels are officially being made into PS2 games by none other than Shiny.

NIHON GAME OTAKU

by Max Everingham

One day perhaps, the Superbowl will actually be open to other nations and the winners will be able to call themselves World Champions without making a mockery of the term. Or sports announcers could just engage their brains before they speak. For now, however, we must be content with the relative success of EA/Square's decision to bring *Madden NFL 2001* over the water and into Japanese gamers' homes.

Selling just over 16,000 copies may not seem a huge result, but it ends the drought in football games making it to release in Japan and could pave the way for more publishers to do likewise. Who knows, maybe it'll encourage more people to play the real game. Or maybe they'll just carry on playing soccer like the rest of the world and enter tournaments such as the World Cup where like, you know, the world is actually invited.

Japan-side, it's a little quiet on the PS2 front. However, a recent chat with a prominent Famitsu game journalist turned up an interesting view on Sony's imminent competition. Xbox, he said, looks great, but there are no games announced yet for Japanese gamers to get excited about. They don't care about US sports games, and *Malice* looks pretty, but isn't much of a game at this point. So the game bible crew are taking a 'wait and see' approach with the new machine and are focusing their attentions almost exclusively on PlayStation 2 releases set over the next six months. Their mag even ran *Onimusha* covers two months running!

RETAIL REPORT

With the top four games being on handhelds this week, and *Onimusha* having dropped right off the radar and not even figuring in the top 30, it's left to teeny-bop *J-Poppers Morning Musume* to save a bit of face for PS2. Pegged to be a hit as soon as it's announced, fans of the girls can 'follow' their favorite band member through the interactive video and give vent to all their stalker tendencies without coming close to being arrested. Perfect.

PS/PS2 COMBINED CHART*

1. Space Venus starring Morning Musume (PS2/ SCE)
2. Madden NFL Superbowl 2001 (PS2/ EA/ Square)
3. Furaiiki (PS/ Fog)
4. PachiSlot Aruze King 4 (PS/ Aurze)
5. Victorious Boxers (PS2/ESP)
6. Mobile Suit Gundam (PS2/Bandai)
7. Tales of Eternia (PS/Namco)
8. Bouncer (PS2/Square)
9. Bomberman Land (PS/Hudson)
10. Rockman X5 (PS/ Capcom)

*Source: Famitsu 2/16/2001

CROC



VS



CROCODILE HUNTER

ROUND ONE: Lifestyle

Croc: Wrestles with being a forgotten mascot character

Crocodile Hunter: Wrestles crocodiles with his bare hands

Advantage: Croc. Hunter

Croc: Runs with little furry animals called Gobbos

Crocodile Hunter: Runs from furry little animals called dingos

Advantage: Draw

ROUND TWO: Character Traits

Croc: Jumps on enemies with his ass

Crocodile Hunter: Regularly makes an ass of himself

Advantage: Croc

Croc Hunter: Speaks in unintelligible made-up gibberish

Crocodile Hunter: Speaks in unintelligible Australian gibberish

Advantage: Draw

ROUND THREE: Drawbacks

Croc Hunter: Could be mistaken for an alligator

Crocodile Hunter: Could be mistaken for singer John Denver

Advantage: Croc

Croc Hunter: Lack of clothing isn't surprising for a crocodile

Croc. Hunter: Safari clothes reveal too much of "Lil' Croc"

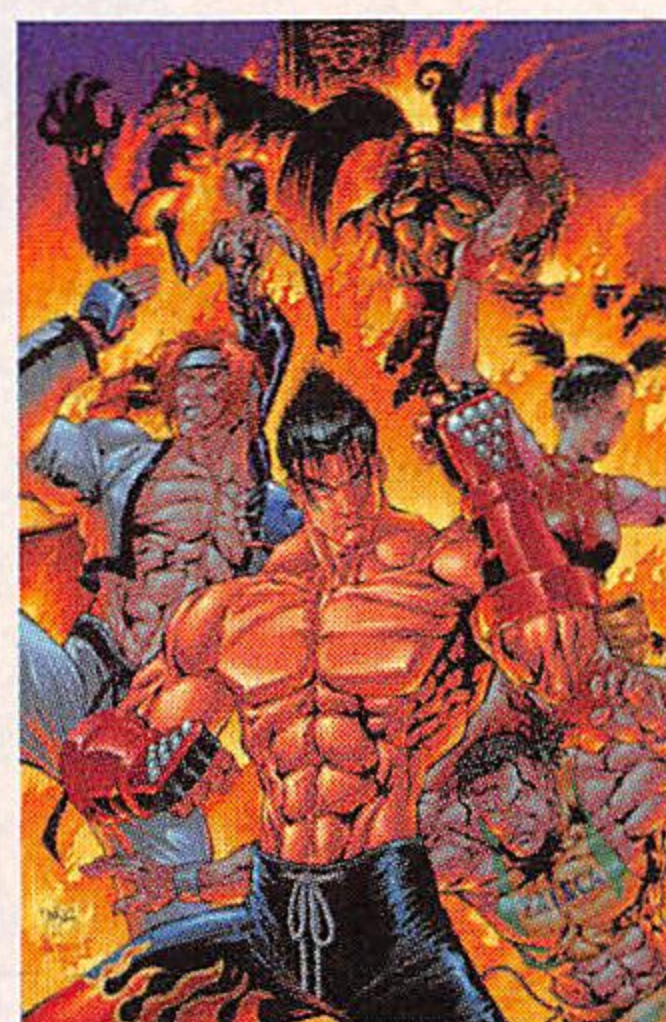
Advantage: Croc

WINNER: CROC

Tekken Goes Very 2D

New comic book based on Namco's top fighter announced

You've probably guessed already how much we all love comic books, so when we got word that a new series based on Namco's *Tekken* fighters was in the works, we got plenty interested. Dark Design Works is gearing up to



▲ *Tekken* Comic — Dark Design Works has some solid talent behind its new books, and the results speak for themselves.

unleash the *Tekken Infinity* series on the masses during the coming months, with art from the likes of Long Vo (Echo), Louis Small Jr. (Vampirella), and Yvel Guichet (Harley Quinn). As you can see from the preliminary art we've received, it's already looking great.

Dark Design Works is also promising that its officially licensed comics will explore the secret origin of Unknown, the final boss from *Tekken Tag Tournament* on PS2. Finally, we'll get to find out what that strange girl with the floating wolf spirit is all about —

the game certainly doesn't try to explain things!

Keep checking with your favorite comic book shop for availability details on the first issue of *Tekken Infinity*.

Correction

Last issue, we incorrectly attributed THQ as the publisher of *The Lost* for PS2. In fact, Crave Entertainment will publish the Irrational Games-developed title. What the hell were we thinking?!

PlayStation®2

The Legends of Fierce Warriors come alive!

DYNASTY WARRIORS 2

Available Now!

"Easily one of the most technically impressive action games ever."

— PSM

- * Play as one of 9 legendary warriors battling on foot and horseback!
- * Join the ranks of heroes of old as you fight through hundreds of merciless warriors for the greatest prize of all — China!



- * Witness extraordinary graphics on battlefields of truly epic proportions!



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koei
www.koeigames.com

Peripherals

We take a look at two more options for enhancing your PS2 home theater experience, plus one of the first LCD screens that lets you enjoy PSone gaming on the go.

▼ It's not as powerful as Midiland's larger 8200 system, but the 7100 Plus still delivers lots of high-quality Dolby Digital sound for an excellent price.



\$4 MIDILAND 7100 PLUS

Company: **Midiland** Price: **\$299.99**

The S4 Midiland 7100 Plus exhibits many of the same qualities that earned its larger sibling, the S4 Midiland 8200, an 8 out of 10 score when we reviewed it back in issue 39. It's a well-made, compact system that delivers clear, powerful Dolby Digital sound for less than the price of most stand-alone 5.1 channel receivers.

Priced \$100 less than the larger Midiland system, the 7100 Plus isn't quite as powerful (10w per channel versus 20, and 50w on the subwoofer versus 100), but actually boasts some nice design touches that result in it being a better made product. For one, the subwoofer's standby switch is conveniently located on its front, the decoder unit is more

sturdy with a larger display, and the remote is a full-size job that isn't easily misplaced like the credit card-sized one that comes with the 8200.

We tested the 7100 Plus with movies and games and found that, while its satellite speaker output may not be in the league of component systems with 100w per channel, the system can easily fill a large-size room with high-impact sound. Overall, the Midiland 8200 sounds better, but if you don't have \$400 to spare and still want a great dedicated system for PS2 games and DVDs, this is one of the best out there.

► **Randy Nelson**

PSM
FINAL SCORE **8/10**

PS2 WIRELESS REMOTE

Company: **Nyko** Price: **\$19.99**

Of all the PS2 DVD remotes we've reviewed, Nyko's entry into the fray is the most flimsy feeling of the bunch — it certainly won't win any industrial design awards. In fact, when we noticed its wiggly directional buttons and battery compartment lid that requires a jeweler's screwdriver to remove, we were about ready to give up on this one.

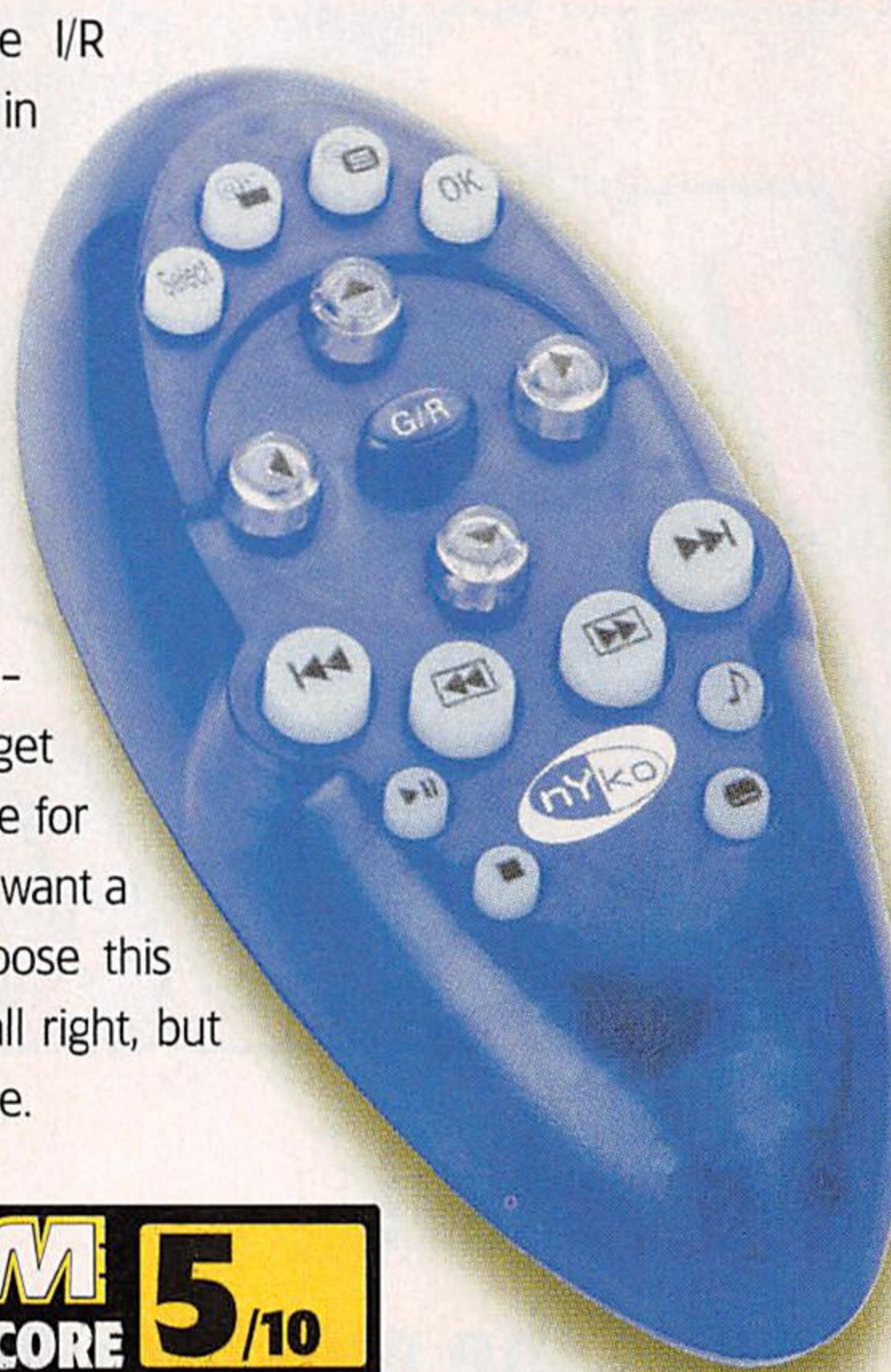
Thankfully, the remote is actually quite ergonomic and the button layout is well thought out (with the exception of the button that switches between the remote and

game controller plugged into the I/R receiver's pass-through — it's right in the middle of the directional buttons where the confirm button should be). Otherwise, every frequently-used DVD playback function is accounted for on its face, and the trigger-like confirm button works quite well.

Still, considering its cheap construction and the fact that you can get Mad Catz' excellent universal remote for the same price, you'd really need to want a compact, PS2-only remote to choose this one. If that's what you're after, it's all right, but you can do better for the same price.

► **Randy Nelson**

PSM
FINAL SCORE **5/10**



◀ It's ergonomic and full featured, but its flaky construction is questionable when you compare Nyko's remote to same-priced offerings from other companies.



MONITOR

Company: **InterAct**
Price: **\$129.99**

Finally, someone has released a LCD screen for PSone, and we must admit, it's even more impressive than we expected.

The first thing that you'll notice when you attach it to the PSone is the

solid construction and compact look, which is perfect for travelling. The most impressive aspect, though, has to be the quality of the screen. While playing even fast-paced games such as *RayCrisis* and *Medal of Honor Underground*, there was absolutely no hint of blur or distortion. In fact, everything remained crisp, clean, and detailed.

The only real weaknesses were the sound output and absence of a battery pack. Its tiny speakers just don't cut it, although attaching decent headphones solves the problem — thankfully a

headphone jack is included. And while the included car power adapter makes the PSone good for road trips, without a battery, taking it on a plane or train is impossible.

Despite its flaws, the Mobile Monitor is one of the coolest accessories we've seen yet, and for only \$130 it's definitely worth it if you're a gamer on the go. We'll take a look at its competition next issue, so stay tuned.

► **Tokoya**

◀ Want to play your PSone games on the go? This excellent monitor makes it a reality — now we just need a battery pack.

PSM
FINAL SCORE **8/10**

Oni™

A dark future... an uncertain past...

NO ONE LEFT TO TRUST

"Game Of The Month"

- Playboy, February 2001

"Oni seems poised to dominate next-gen systems."

- EGM - Dec 2000

"Oni is already far more fun than the finished Japanese version of The Bouncer."

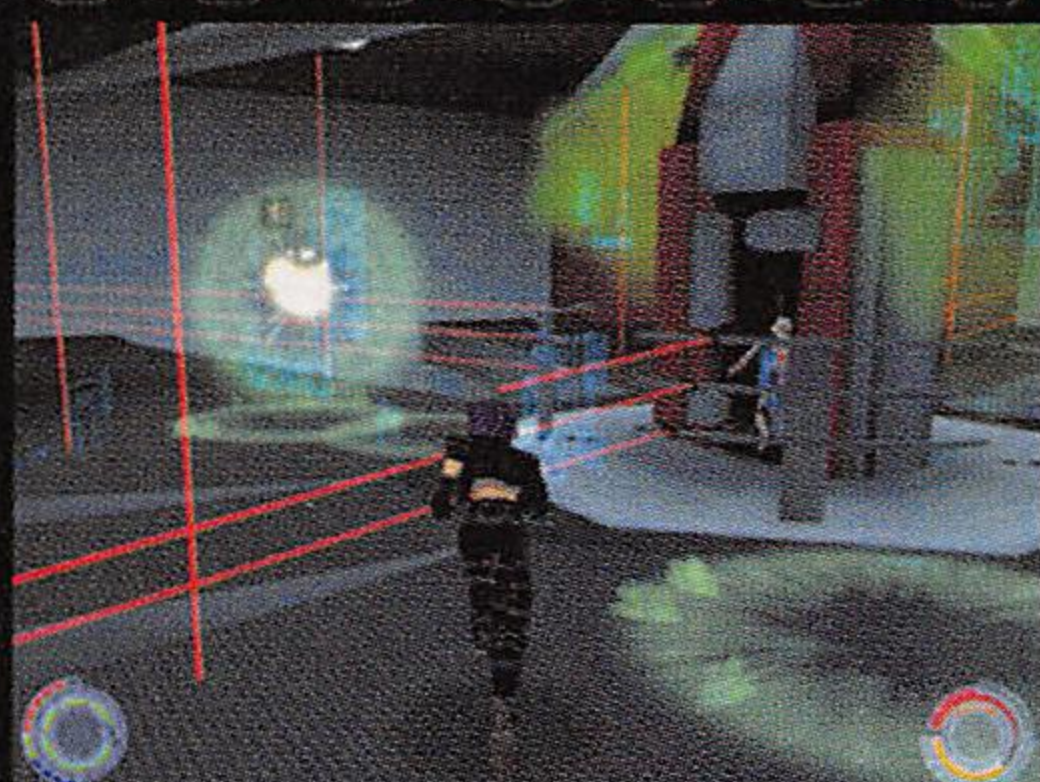
- DailyRadar.com, January 2001

"Oni is the kind of game that's helping to shape the next generation of games."

- IGN.com, January 2001

"Game Of The Month"

- Stuff, February 2001



Available now: The Oni comic book from Dark Horse Comics



Animated Violence



BUNGIE



Q&A: Sinking Our Fangs into Blood Omen 2



We sat down with Associate Producer, Sam Newman, one of the people responsible for the rebirth of Kain.

PERSONAL INFO

PSM: Just for the record, can you tell us a little bit about yourself? What games have you worked on in the past? How long have you been at the company?

SN: Sure, my name is Sam Newman and I've been an Associate Producer here at Crystal Dynamics for about a year now. Prior to here I produced at Infogrames where I worked on Slave Zero, Test Drive 2001, Redline and some others.

WORK IN PROGRESS

PSM: How long has *Blood Omen 2* been in development? When do you plan to release it?

SN: Brainstorming and preproduction for *Blood Omen 2* started around two years ago. The engine we are using is being developed in-house for multiple platforms and we are just beginning to see what it can do with the PS2. You will see *Blood Omen 2* on the shelves for Christmas this year.

PSM: What do you feel are the major differences between this "sequel" and its predecessor? How about this game and *Soul Reaver 2*?

SN: *Blood Omen 2* takes the mood and setting of the original game and places it in a detailed and realistic 3D world. The new game focuses much more on NPC

interaction: talking and dealing with characters in the world, not just fighting and killing them. It is also a much more cinematic experience than the first game, both in terms of the gameplay and an unfolding storyline that will keep the player hooked. The major difference between our game and *Soul Reaver 2* is that *Blood Omen* is essentially a vampire game. The entire focus is on making that experience as involving and fun as possible. We also have a more linear game progression, as opposed to *Soul Reavers* "hub-based" adventure.

PSM: What was the inspiration or goal in doing the sequel? What did you want to do differently or better?

SN: Our main goal was expanding the character of Kain and also giving a different gaming experience within the *Legacy of Kain* world. The first *Blood Omen* was a 2D role-playing game with great story and atmosphere. We wanted to bring that fiction to a modern game platform. As a 3D action/adventure game, we could create a much more immersive world and a more involved and fun game experience. In this spirit, we have created a detailed and dynamic combat system that should be a big step above what gamers are used to.

PSM: Have you included anything that only fans of the original game will notice?

SN: There are a few references to the old game, but aside from the main characters, this is very much a new game. We wanted to maintain a consistent world for the fans of the old game, but not leave any new gamers "out of the loop." We also wanted to remain true to the *Soul Reaver* games, so that fans of both would see consistency throughout the franchise. One specific thing that remains the same is the way that Kain drinks blood from his victims: blood literally pours through the air and into his mouth, just like in *Blood Omen 1*.

PSM: Can you give us a general synopsis of the game and a little bit of the background storyline? Where does this game take place in the whole Kain timeline?

SN: *Blood Omen 2* starts with Kain waking up from a deep hibernation with much of his memory destroyed. He quickly learns that after the events of *Blood Omen 1*, he had built up an army of vampires, with the intention of conquering Nosgoth. His plans were cut short by a newly created army, the Sarafan, a group of fanatic vampire hunters. Kain was defeated in personal combat by the mysterious Sarafan Lord, and had his most prized possession, the Soul Reaver sword, stripped from him. Gravely wounded and left to die, he instead wakes up over two hundred years later to a much-changed Nosgoth. He has only a single drive: to take revenge on those who had dared to challenge him...

THE TEAM

PSM: How many people are currently working on the game? Have any of them worked on the previous title?

SN: The original *Blood Omen* was developed out of house over five years ago, and that team has not been involved with this project. We have a team of 25 people working on *Blood Omen 2*, split pretty evenly between Art, Programming, Design and Animation. There is also a separate Engine team of three programmers. Many of our team members come from the *Akuji* team and *Gex 3*. We've also hired a number of new people that have worked on everything from first person

"One specific thing that remains the same is the way that Kain drinks blood from his victims: blood literally pours through the air and into his mouth"

shooters and space sims to RPGs.

CHANGES

PSM: What sort of game is it? How does it play? How do the controls work?

SN: I think that *Blood Omen* can best be called a cinematic arcade adventure. Kain is controlled from a third person viewpoint as he explores the world in and around the city of Meridian. While exploring, Kain will be called upon to use stealth, fight, solve puzzles and interact with the inhabitants of Meridian in order to avenge himself and reclaim the Soul Reaver.

PSM: Can you explain how the fighting system works? How much combat will there be in the game?

SN: The concept behind the fighting system is to give Kain a large number of dynamic and powerful moves that are all accessible via the smallest number of button presses. Combat can be split into three major categories — attack, defend and evade, with the attack category containing the most moves. Attack moves themselves are divided up into combo attacks, grabs, unstoppable, ground attacks and single move stealth kills, which are used to take out unwary victims. Then when you consider that each weapon has its own set of moves... The ratio of combat in the game is entirely in the hands of the player. If the player wishes to boldly confront all enemies head on, s/he can. Or, a more thoughtful player may drop into stealth, steal up on an unsuspecting victim and rub them out with a stealth kill.



PSM: We noticed the positional blocking system that you've implemented. Can you explain more how that works? Also, what other sort of innovative features are you thinking of including?

SN: When designing the combat system, we checked out all the features in both one-on-one and more traditional fighting games. One of the things we observed from this was that, although the attacks were becoming more complex, blocking hadn't ever changed and was still very static, with the defender having block high and low poses that were used as a 'catch all' regardless of the location of the attack. Therefore, we set out to produce a more realistic blocking mechanic, whereby the defender's weapon actually intercepted the attacker's... just like in real life.

However, in order to remove the complexity having to line up the block with the attack, much of the blocking will be automated for the player. This again fits the concept of making it easy for the player to do very cool things.

Some of the other very cool features come in the form of Dark Gifts. Kain acquires Dark Gifts by consuming other vampires powers. For an example of this, see Kain leaping from rooftop to rooftop or taking control of the weak-minded.

PSM: Speaking of these "Dark Gifts", how does he get them and what sort of situations would he use them in?

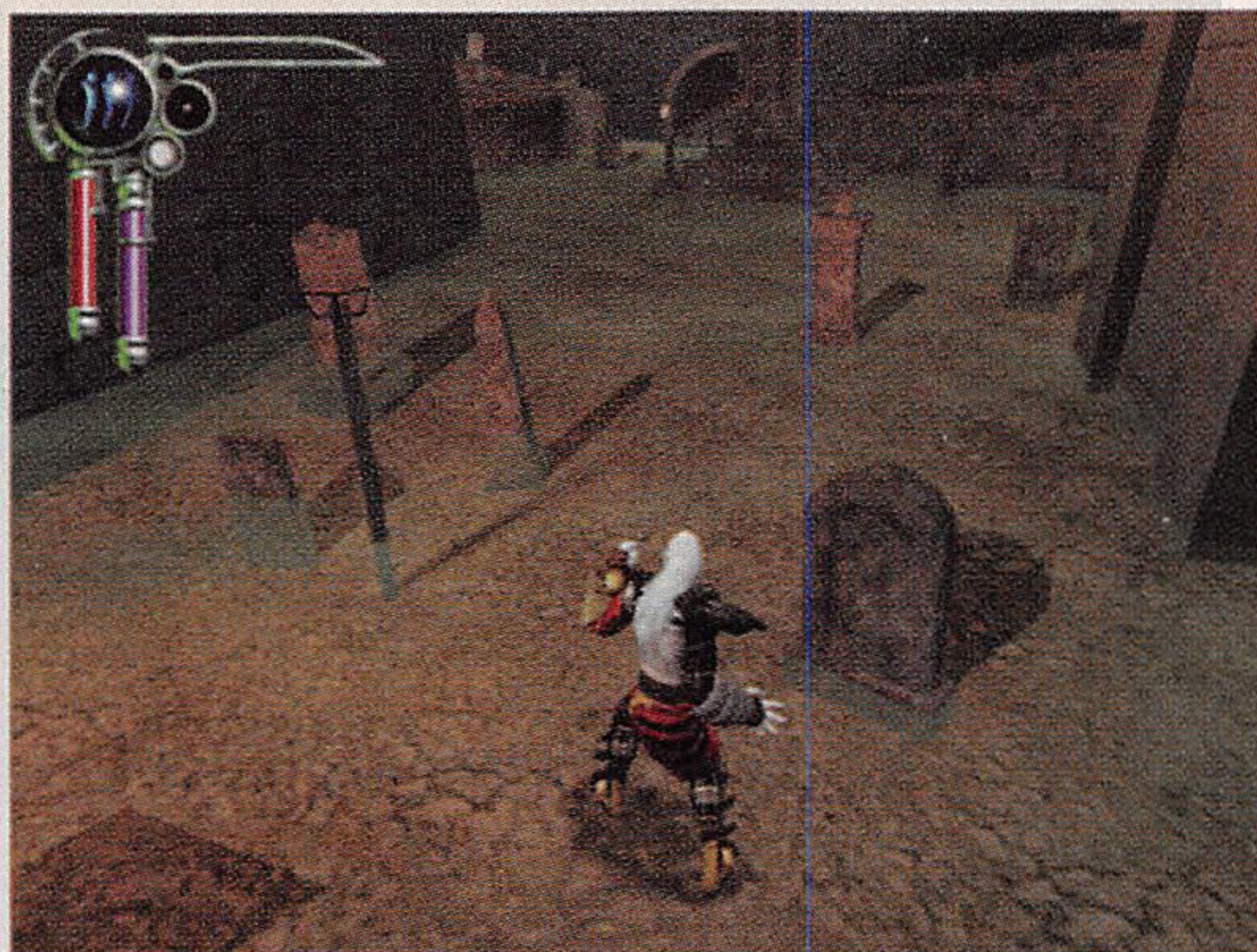
SN: As Kain travels through Meridian, he will encounter and eventually confront different main characters in single combat. Each of these opponents has a particular ability that defines who they are and what role they play in the story. When Kain kills one of these characters and drinks their blood, he absorbs some of their essence and gains a new ability. Midway through the game, Kain meets a vampire with the ability to take control of other weak-minded folk. Once Kain defeats him, he can then charm other folk and force them to do tasks that he is prevented from doing himself.

PSM: Can you give a rundown of what sort of environments gamers can expect? What are your favorites and why?

SN: The story centers on the intrigue of Nosgoth's new capital city, Meridian, so much of the environments are urban. As the storyline progresses, Kain finds that he must travel outside the city to some really bizarre locations. My favorite right now is the Eternal Prison. In the Prison, time doesn't flow in the normal sense, no one ages and therefore never dies. This gives us a setting to create some real creepy moments of terror and suspense. The whole area is very "other worldly" and surreal, with doorways leading to infinitely large rooms, time puzzles that alter the structures, people dying and reawakening. I'm a big Cthulu horror fan and the Eternal Prison reminds me a lot of those stories.

PSM: How are the levels broken up? Does the player have to complete certain missions to continue on? If so, can you give a few examples of what typical missions will be like?

SN: Each level has a specific mission or series of submissions. Some of the goals will be finding people to get information, or searching through part of the city to get an object before the Sarafan find it. Once Kain has completed his current goal, it will lead him to the next part of the story and a new goal. The transitions between the levels are relatively transparent. We are using a technology that allows us to stream in levels on the fly, so while the player will get a sense of goal completion by the interactions he has in the game, he won't be interrupted by "please wait..."



PSM: What sort of puzzles are you including? Will there be a lot of them? Can you give us a few examples?

SN: Each of the levels will contain puzzles, with some being a little more puzzle oriented than others. Many of the devices in Meridian are powered by Glyph Energy that has been installed by the mysterious Glyphwrights. Some puzzles see Kain needing to manipulate the glyph energy in order to solve puzzles that are similar in design to electric circuits.

PSM: Will there be any rendered FMV sequences or will the movie segments be all in-game?

SN: No. We have over a dozen major cinematics, but we wanted to avoid breaking the reality of our scene by cutting to a FMV that looks significantly different from what the player sees in the game. The original *Blood Omen* was 2D and required cutting to FMVs to move the plot. Technically and quality-wise, our character models and environments are perfect for the cinematics we've scripted.

PSM: How long do you think it will take the average gamer to complete *Blood Omen 2*?

SN: It's a little early to be certain, but we are estimating between 50 and 70 hours of gameplay.

ON BEING A VAMPIRE

PSM: So, since Kain is a vampire, how does he go about getting his daily supply of blood?

SN: There are many ways for Kain to appropriate blood, and all of them are at someone else's expense! For instance, Kain could take the risky route of striding down the middle of the street slaying the terrified peasants who will do their best to run for their pitiful lives. However, revealing his vampiric nature will see peasants scream for help or call for the Sarafan. Nearby guards could observe Kain and attack. Messy fights will also yield less blood. Far better to lurk in the shadows, use stealth, and thrust your sword through the back of a victim's throat. Or maybe take control of a peasants mind and walk he/her into an alleyway where death awaits.

PSM: If you were turned into a vampire, what would you do with your new powers?

SN: Immortality would be the best part; it would take the pressure off of some of our deadlines!

PSM: Thanks for taking the time for this interview, Sam. Do you have any last comments you would like to share with our readers?

SN: This game will almost be three years in the making, and I think the payoff is incredible. We're making a truly beautiful, complex, and (most of all) fun game that I think gamers will be thrilled with.

PSM: From what we've already seen of the game, we think they will be.

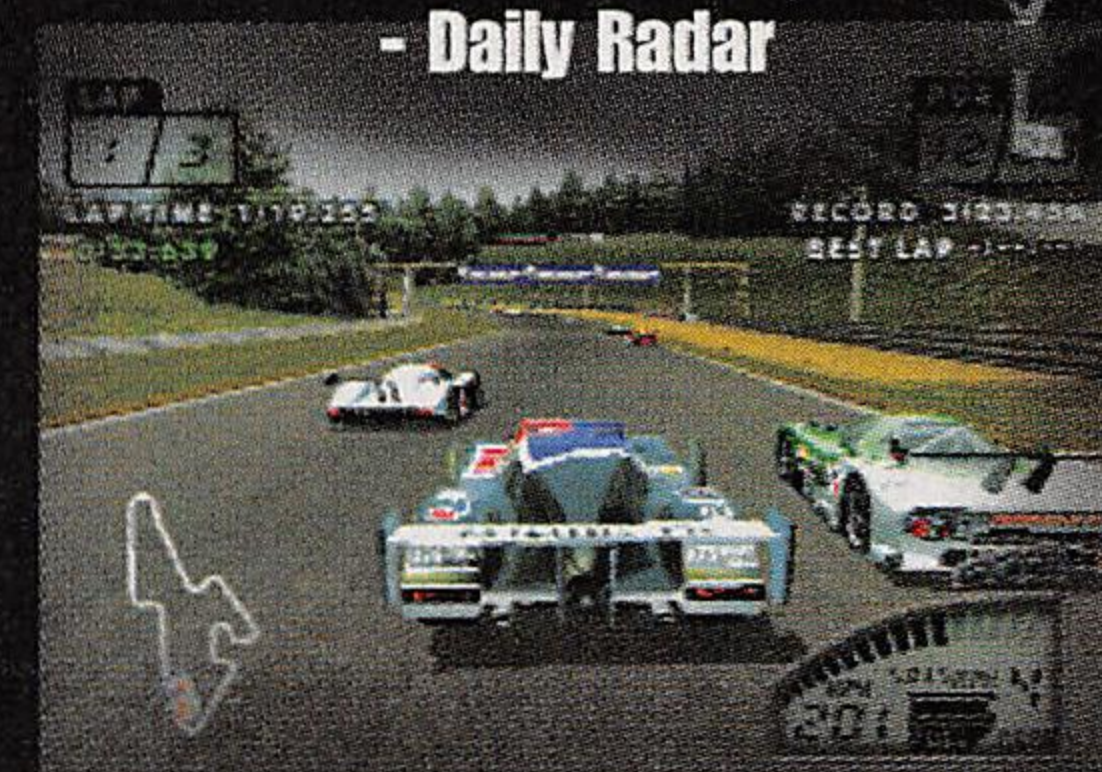
"...AN ABSOLUTE TRIUMPH - IT'S VERY LIKELY THE BEST PURE RACING GAME AVAILABLE ON DREAMCAST."

- Official Dreamcast Magazine



"TEST DRIVE LE MANS IS FLAT-OUT ONE OF THE BEST RACERS EVER FOR DREAMCAST -- OR ANY OTHER SYSTEM FOR THAT MATTER."

- Daily Radar



"NO RACING GAME CURRENTLY AVAILABLE FOR DREAMCAST OR PS2 COMES CLOSE."

- IGN.com

TEST DRIVE LE MANS



www.tdlemons.com



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Checkpoint

This is your one-stop spot to get a handle on the best stuff headed our way. Please keep in mind that release dates are always subject to change.

This Month's New Releases

PS2

TITLE	GENRE	PUBLISHER
Adventures of Cookie & Cream	Action	Agetec
Cool Boarders 2001	Sports	Sony
Gran Turismo 3 A-Spec	Racing	Sony
Heroes of Might and Magic	Strategy	3DO
MTV Music Generator 2.0	Music	Codemasters
Roadster Trophy	Racing	Titus
Tokyo Extreme Racer: Zero	Racing	Crave

PSone

TITLE	GENRE	PUBLISHER
Digimon World 2	Strategy	Bandai
Kasparov Chess	Strategy	Interplay
Point Blank 3	Shooter	Namco
WDL: WarJetz	Action	3DO

Three Month Outlook

MAY PS2

TITLE	GENRE	PUBLISHER
Commandos 2	Strategy	Eidos
F1 Racing Championship	Racing	UbiSoft
Gauntlet: Dark Legacy	Action	Midway
Giants: Citizen Kabuto	Action	Interplay
Herdy Gerdy	Action	Eidos
The Jungle Book Rhythm & Groove	Dancing	UbiSoft
Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver 2	Adventure	Eidos
Portal Runner	Action	3DO
Red Faction	Action	THQ
Resident Evil Code: Veronica X	Action	Capcom
Star Wars: Super Bombad Racing	Racing	LucasArts
Supercar Street Challenge	Racing	Activision
Ultimate Sky Surfer	Action	Crave
WDL: WarJetz	Action	3DO

MAY PSone

TITLE	GENRE	PUBLISHER
Alone in the Dark 4	Adventure	Infogrames
Batman Gotham Racer	Racing	Ubi Soft
Inspector Gadget	Action	UbiSoft
Roswell Conspiracies	Adventure	Redstorm
Sheep Dog & Wolf	Puzzle	Infogrames
Simpsons Wrestling	Wrestling	Fox Interactive
Time Crisis: Project Titan	Shooter	Namco
VIP	Action	Ubi Soft
World's Scariest Police Chases	Racing	Fox Interactive

JUNE PS2

TITLE	GENRE	PUBLISHER
Bloody Roar 3	Fighting	Namco
Clive Barker's Undying	Adventure	EA
Lotus Extreme Challenge	Racing	Virgin Interactive
Project Eden	Action	Eidos
Reiselied: Ephemeral Fantasia	RPG	Konami
Rumble Racing	Racing	EA
Seven Blades	Action	Konami
Stunt GP	Racing	Infogrames
Top Gun	Air Combat	Titus
Twisted Metal Black	Action	Sony

JUNE PSone

TITLE	GENRE	PUBLISHER
Titan A.E.	Action	Fox Interactive

JULY PS2

TITLE	GENRE	PUBLISHER
Klonoa 2: Lunatea's Veil	Platform	Namco
Test Drive Off-Road: Wide Open	Racing	Infogrames

JULY PSone

TITLE	GENRE	PUBLISHER
No Known Titles At This Time		

Cool Stuff

Here's a look at some of the hottest new gear everyone's talking about

AIBO ERS-210

\$1590 / SONY

Last month, we took a look ahead at one of Sony's future products, the SDR-3X humanoid robot. This time around, we've got something a little more down-to-earth (yet still way cool) for those robot fans in the audience.

A close cousin of Sony's upright-walking tin man, the AIBO 2.0 represents Sony's second-generation attempt at combining robotic technology and limited artificial intelligence for the home to create a realistic pet — in this case a puppy. Nearly half the price of the original AIBO, this little guy is living (well, almost) proof that technology gets better, while prices get lower with each successive generation of a product.

Unlike the original AIBO, v2.0 can actually learn to a limited extent. It can also see and hear — it'll even come when it's name (which its owner gives it) is called and respond to other voice commands as well. What'll they think of next?



PSM'S MOST WANTED

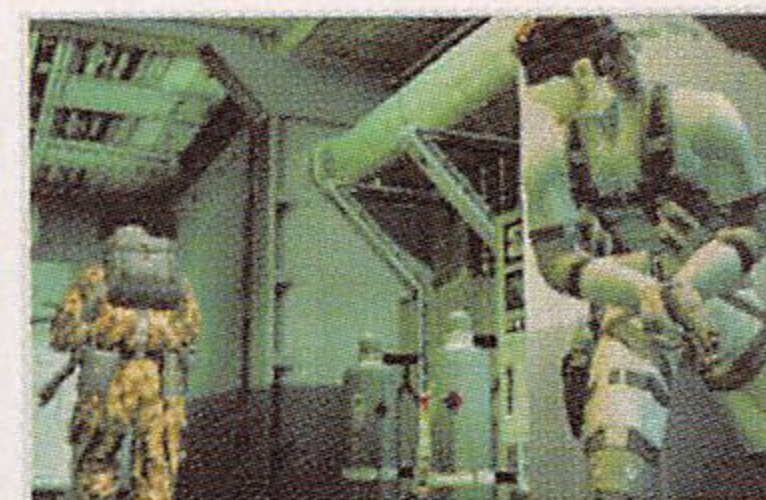


1. Virtua Fighter 4

When we first heard rumors that Sega was bringing this classic fighting series to PS2, we thought it was a joke. But it wasn't — it was many a gamers' dream come true.

2. Metal Gear Solid 2

We just got the latest trailer, and our anticipation level ratcheted up another notch. PS2 will be the **ONLY** place to experience MGS2 in its entirety, so there's never been a better excuse to get your hands on Sony's new system.

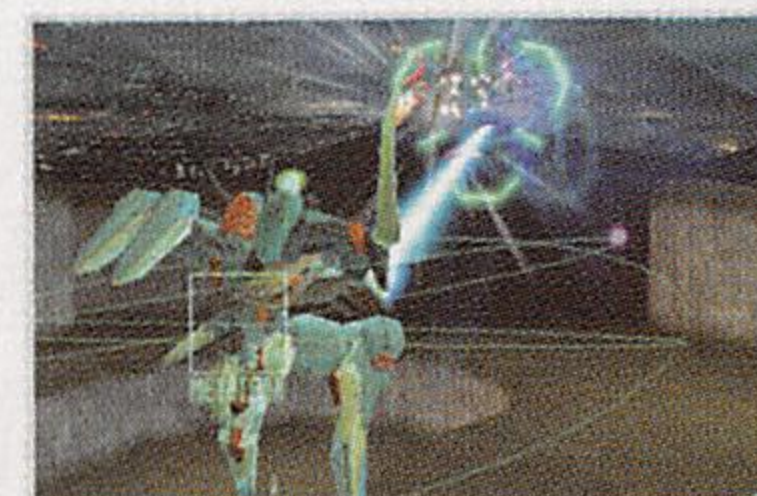


3. Final Fantasy X

Things have gone kinda quiet on the FFX front, but new info will be surfacing soon. It's expected to be on-hand in some form at the spring Tokyo Game Show, and we'll be there to deliver the full scoop!

4. Devil May Cry

The more we see of this latest offering from Capcom, the more we want a playable version. The new environments we've seen are nearly photo-realistic, and the action never seems to slow down in the slightest.



5. Zone Of The Enders

Will Konami's first original game on PS2 live up to the hype? The only things that could hurt this one are of it's A) too short and B) too repetitive. But we've got a feeling it'll be right as rain.

6. Gran Turismo 3

After seeing the first screens of GT3, all we can say is "give to PSM!" This game will probably be the standard by which all other PS2 titles are judged on a technical level. And we've got high hopes for the gameplay, too.



7. Blood Omen II

This sequel is shaping up to be very special. Now, if only we could get some hands-on playtime with it to see if all of Crystal Dynamic's cool-sounding play mechanics live up to their billing.

8. Red Faction

THQ's first-person blaster is looking hot. The GeoMod engine, which allows for nearly anything to be destroyed, is an awesome idea and some of the weapon ideas are just mind-blowing.



9. Klonoa 2

Having played the short demo Namco sent us, we just can't wait to experience more of this game's old-school platforming charm. We hope that it'll end up being longer and more challenging than the first.

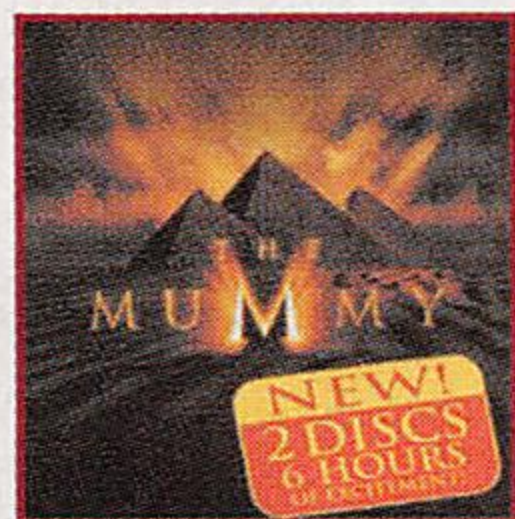
10. Extermination

We've got high hopes from this third-person action romp from the creators of Tomba! Hopefully its mix of Syphon Filter-like action and Resident Evil-style chills will prove as well-done in action as it does in screenshots.



Hot In April

TOP 10 DVDs



OUR TOP PICK:

THE MUMMY: ULTIMATE EDITION

4/24/01
Even if you've already got this serial-style adventure flick on DVD you'll want to take notice. This truly ultimate two-disc re-release not only contains Dolby Digital and DTS version of the film, but also nearly four hours of extras.

2. Rocky: Special Edition 04/24/01
3. Lawrence of Arabia: Special Edition 04/03/01
4. Krull: Special Edition 04/03/01
5. Creepshow 2 04/10/01
6. Empire Records 04/03/01
7. Maximum Overdrive 04/10/01
8. The Slayers Try Set (Four Discs) 04/10/01
9. Moldiver 04/21/01
10. Hamlet (2000) 04/17/01

TOP 5 MOVIES (Theater)



OUR TOP PICK:

JOSIE AND THE PUSSYCATS

4/06/01
We didn't watch this cartoon (Scooby Doo for girls) growing up, but bring it to the big screen as a live-action flick starring some of the hottest up-and-coming actresses around and we're all about it. Go figure.

2. Driven 4/27/01
Sylvester Stallone returns as an aging formula one pro hired to coach a brilliant, yet unfocused younger drive. And it's got Burt Reynolds!
3. Pluto Nash 4/06/01
Eddy Murphy as a flamboyant casino owner — on another planet. This has to be seen, if just for pure weirdness factor.
4. Along Came A Spider 4/13/01
Morgan Freeman's got the thriller genre in his grasp again, this time as a detective investigating the kidnapping of a senator's daughter.
5. Rock Star 4/13/01
Mark Wahlberg plays an ex-salesman obsessed with becoming like his idols, Judas Priest.

SALES CHARTS

NPD

For January 13

1. MADDEN NFL 2001



2. SSX
3. Tekken Tag Tournament
4. NHL 2001
5. Midnight Club
6. Smuggler's Run
7. FIFA 2001
8. Dynasty Warriors 2
9. NASCAR 2001
10. Summoner

PC DATA

For January 7

1. MADDEN NFL 2001



2. SSX
3. Tekken Tag Tournament
4. NHL 2001
5. Midnight Club
6. Smuggler's Run
7. FIFA 2001
8. Time Splitters
9. NFL GameDay 2001
10. Summoner

PS/PS2 — NPD

For January 13

1. MADDEN NFL 2001 PS2



2. WWF Smackdown 2 PS
3. Final Fantasy IX PS
4. Tony Hawk 2 PS
5. Madden NFL 2001 PS
6. Driver 2 PS
7. Gran Turismo 2 PS
8. Tony Hawk PS
9. SSX PS2
10. Tekken 3 PS

リングオブレッド RING of RED™

Some games recreate a battle.

This one recreates history.

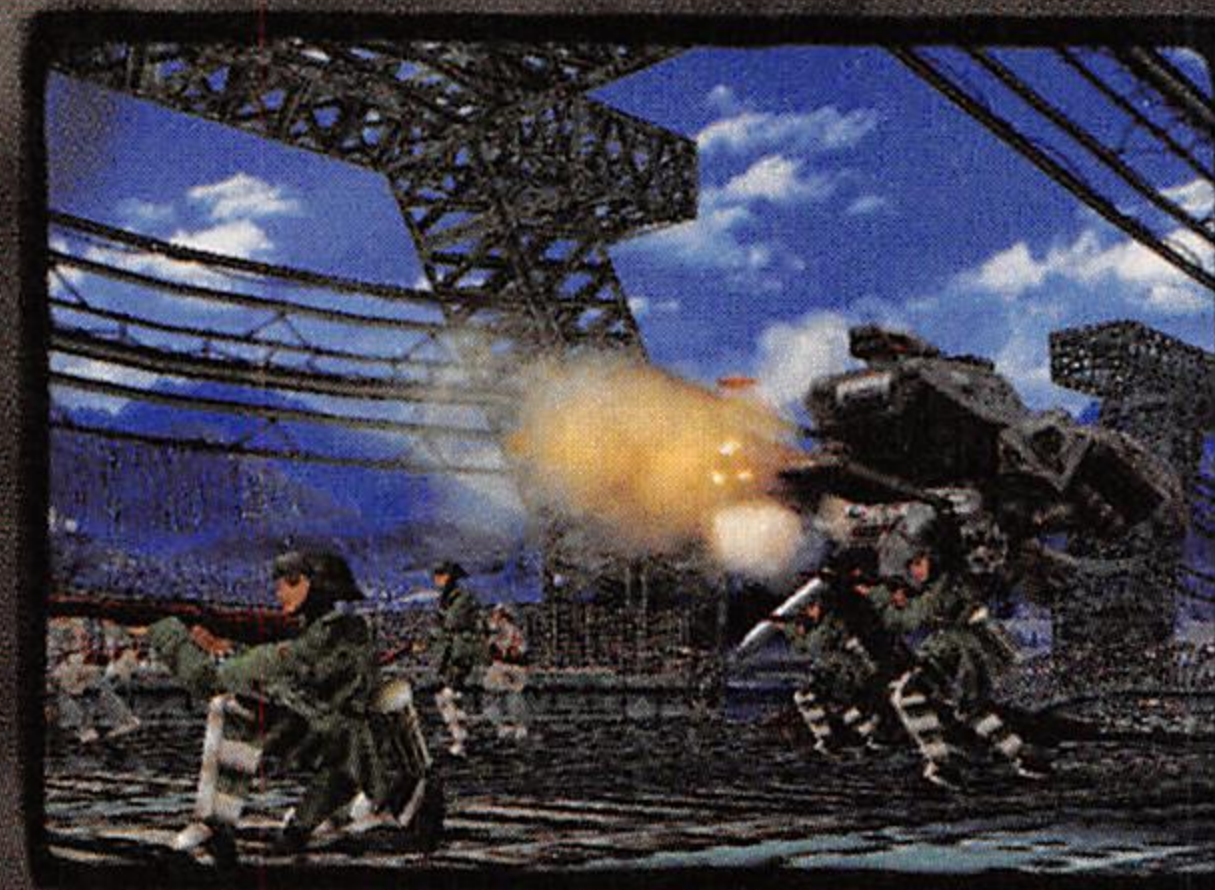
Following WWII, Cold War tensions have peaked. The Soviets and Allies have divided Japan and war has broken out. As leader of the Allies, you'll command squadrons of troops and giant mechs through intense 3D firefights in a real-time battle-action system. Enter the Ring of Red, lead your men to victory, and change the face of history.



PlayStation 2



Animated Blood
Animated Violence



REVIEWS

The world's most accurate,
in-depth game analysis

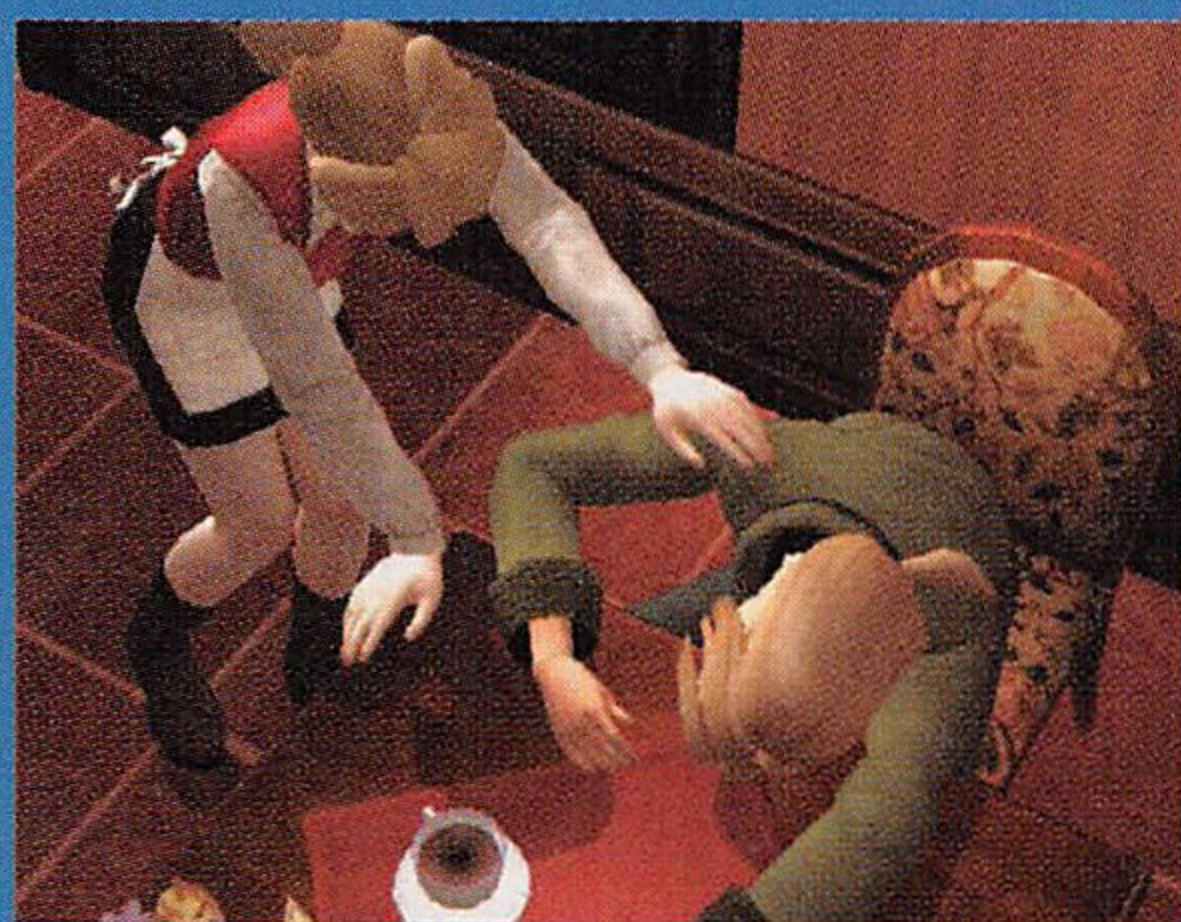
Contents

- 38 ► Bowling, NBA Hoopz, Racing
- 32 ► Darkstone, Puzzle Star Sweep, Starfighter Sanvein
- 30 ► Fear Effect 2: Retro Helix
- 42 ► Oni
- 36 ► Ring Of Red
- 34 ► Shadow Of Destiny
- 40 ► Star Wars Episode I: Starfighter
- 35 ► Winback
- 44 ► SCOREBOARD

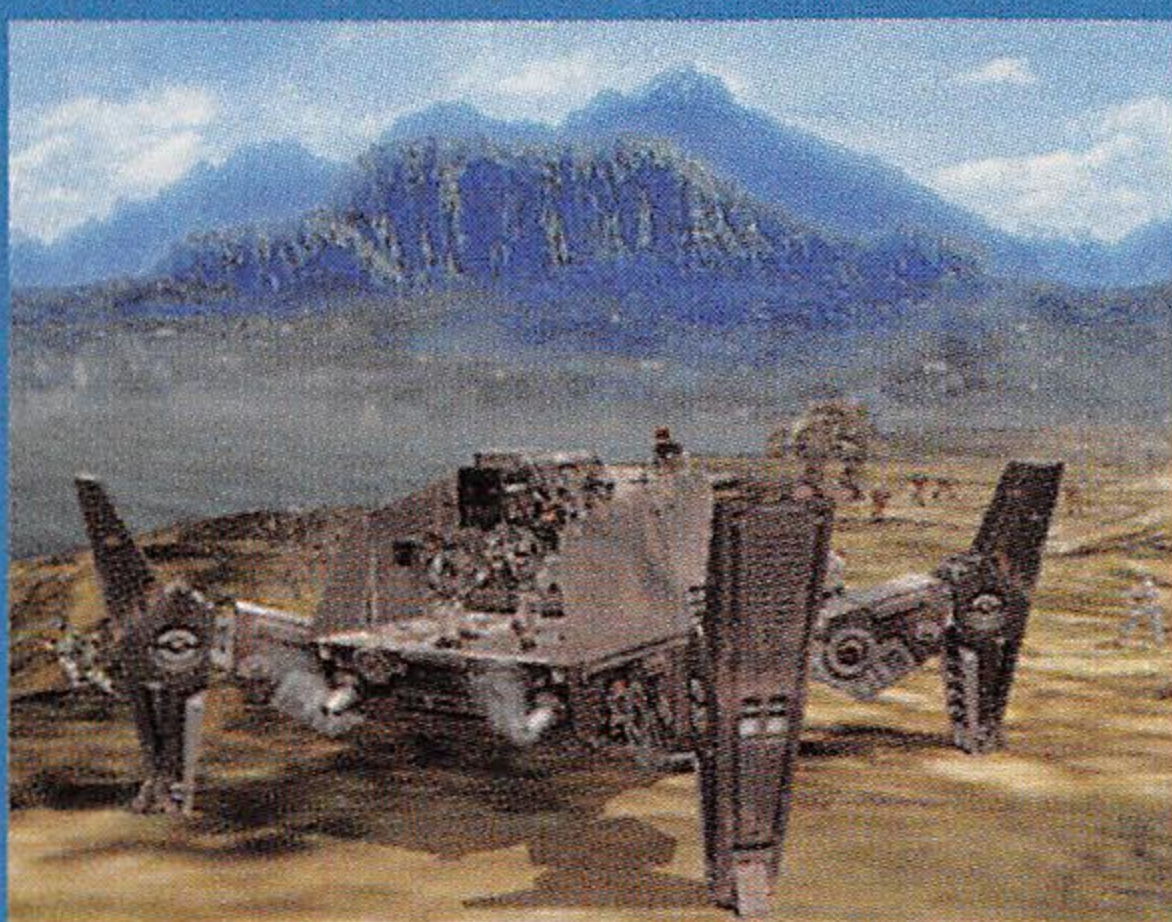
FEAR EFFECT 2: RETRO HELIX

Eidos's intense adventure
game earns its Mature
ESRB rating **pg. 30**

Be sure to check out these top games!



34 ► Shadow Of Destiny



36 ► Ring Of Red

OUR SCORING SYSTEM

- 10 ► **CLASSIC**
A rare gem; Our highest recommendation
- 9 ► **OUTSTANDING**
One of the better games this year
- 8 ► **VERY GOOD**
You can't go wrong **MUST-BUY**
- 7 ► **GOOD**
A solid game
- 6 ► **OKAY**
Kind of fun, but no big deal
- 5 ► **SO-SO**
You've got to love the subject matter
- 4 ► **LACKING** **WARNING**
Big flaws really hurt this game
- 3 ► **BAD**
Not fun at all
- 2 ► **AWFUL**
This game is an insult
- 1 ► **WHY?**
Why would anyone do this to us?

We take our reviews very seriously. We spend hours upon hours play-testing each title to give you the best information to help you buy.

Games that score an 8, 9 or 10 earn a Bronze, Silver or Gold PSM Must-Buy award. We don't hand them out easily, so if you see one on a review, a game box or advertising, be sure to check that game out.

Finally, when looking up past scores, keep in mind that older games usually wouldn't fare as well if they were reviewed today.





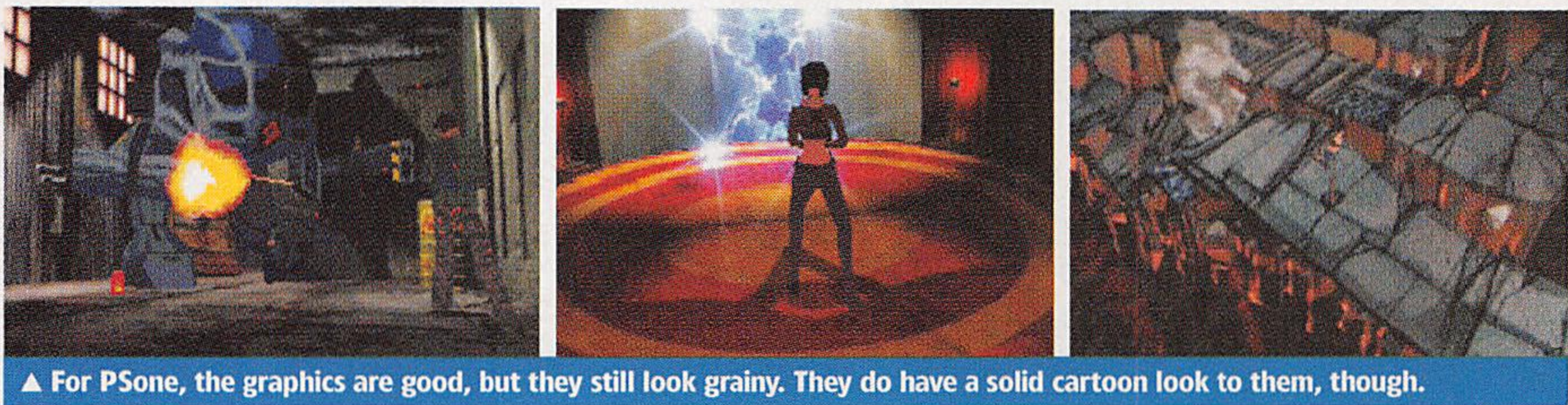
FEAR EFFECT 2: RETRO HELIX

▲ This screen is at a much higher resolution than normal, but the graphics in the game are still pretty impressive.

The PSone's hottest new game is also its raunchiest ever

With most companies recently diverting their focus from PSone to PS2, the old workhorse receives very few quality titles these days. In fact, the vast majority of games that have appeared are mediocre children's games, such as *Donald Duck Goin' Quackers*. For those of you don't yet have a PS2 and are fed up with all those kiddie games, don't fret: Kronos's newest title, *Fear Effect 2: Retro Helix*, should alleviate any frustrations and worries, at least temporarily.

Besides being a quality title overall, *FE2* is about



▲ For PSone, the graphics are good, but they still look grainy. They do have a solid cartoon look to them, though.

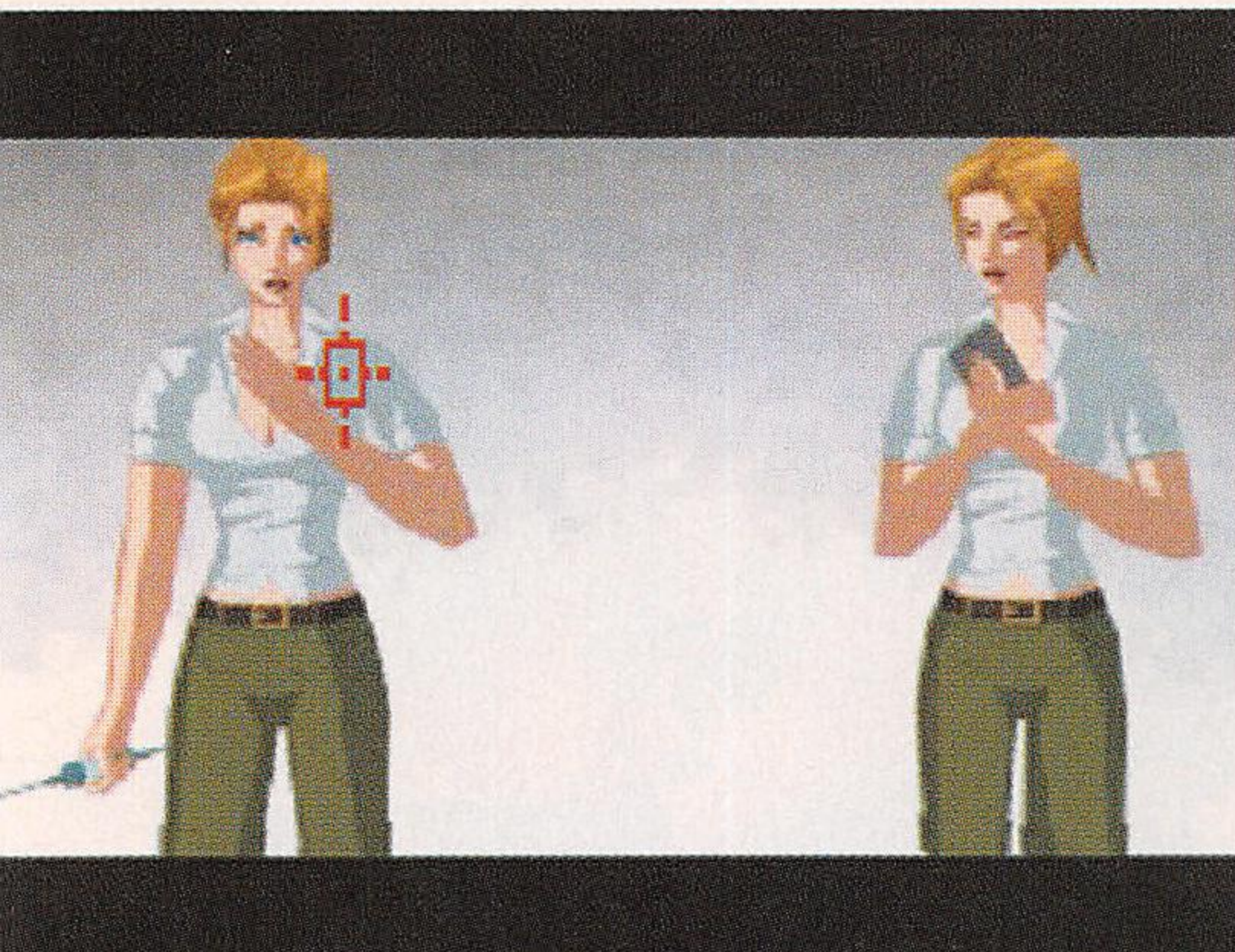
as adult a game as you'll ever see on PlayStation. You'll encounter tons gruesome monsters, violence, gore, and even a little brief nudity. This superficial stuff is only an added bonus though, and would do little to enhance the game without a good plot and solid gameplay. Fortunately, *FE2* has the whole deal.

The story is quite unique, to say the least. It involves four playable mercenaries — Hana, the main character; Rain, Hana's "partner"; Glas, and Deke — who become caught up in a mysterious plot that

revolves around ancient Chinese mythology and a futuristic Retro virus that transforms people into monsters. With tons of twists and other surprises, the story remains fresh and captivating throughout.

Accompanying the cool plot is equally solid gameplay. The action element offers more than simply blasting bad guys. Since each enemy has a unique weakness and each situation presents a unique challenge, the player will have to consider a few variables to discover the easiest, most efficient

HOW IT STACKS UP		
1	► Fear Effect 2 (PS)	8 out of 10
2	► Fear Effect 2 (PS)	8 out of 10
3	► Onimusha (PS2)	8 out of 10
4	► Resident Evil 3 (PS)	8 out of 10
5	► ONI (PS2)	5 out of 10



▲ Which one is the evil twin and which one is Rain?

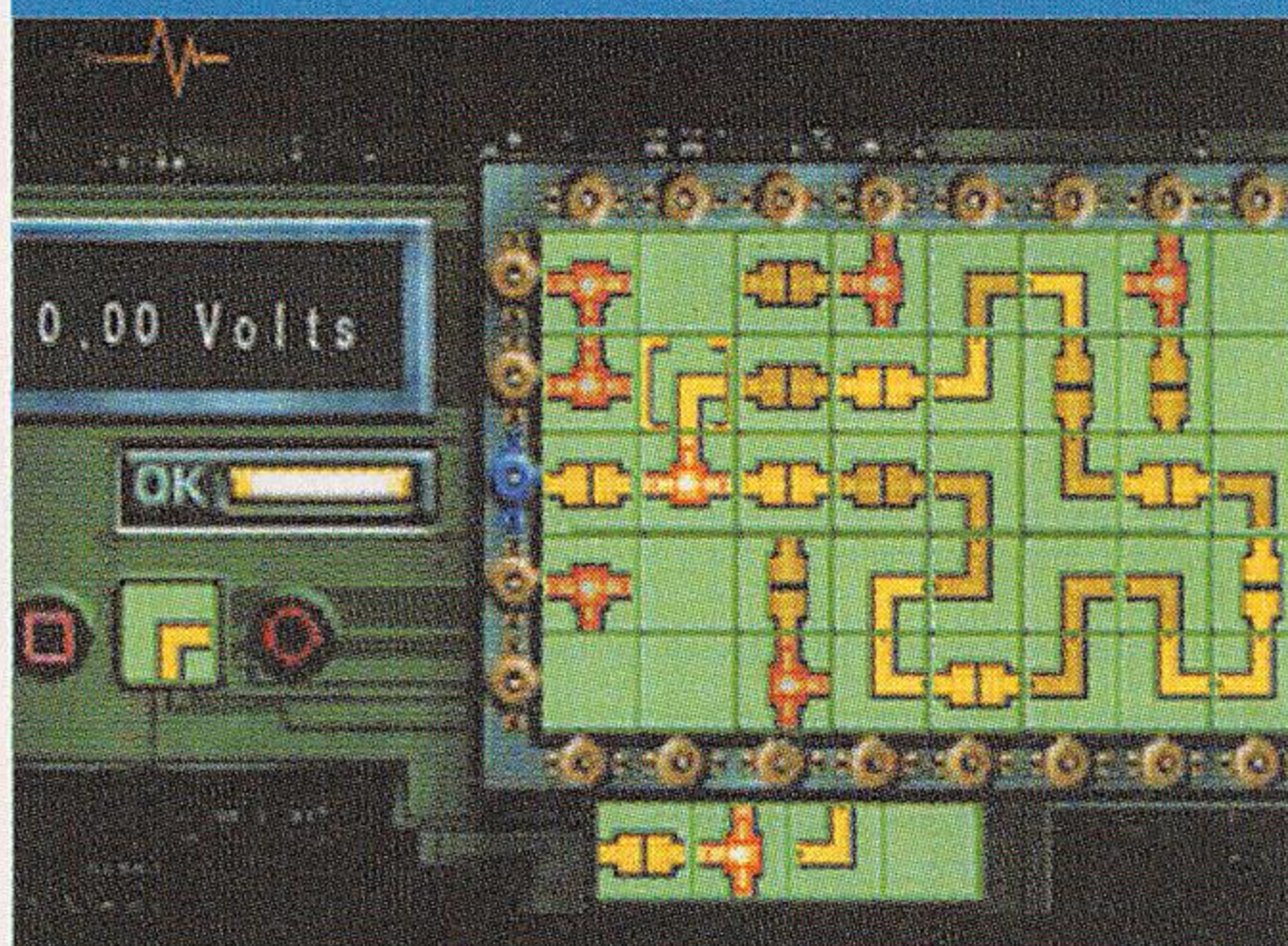
means of succeeding. Some enemies are susceptible to the taser, while others are easily disposed of with the EMP (a sonic boom weapon). In certain situations, when you're out-gunned, you'll even need to act covertly and take out guards with a knife.

To add even more variety to the gameplay, there are a number of interesting puzzles and challenging obstacles to complete. Since Kronos has done a good job of integrating the puzzles and adventure with the action elements, one never seems to detract from the other — an all too common problem with many other games in this genre.

Although I don't have any major complaints, I do have a number of minor ones. First, although most of the puzzles were enjoyable, there were a couple

THE PUZZLES

Some of the puzzles in this game are really quite fun, and offer lots of variety. However, there are a few obscure ones that will make you wanna break the controller.

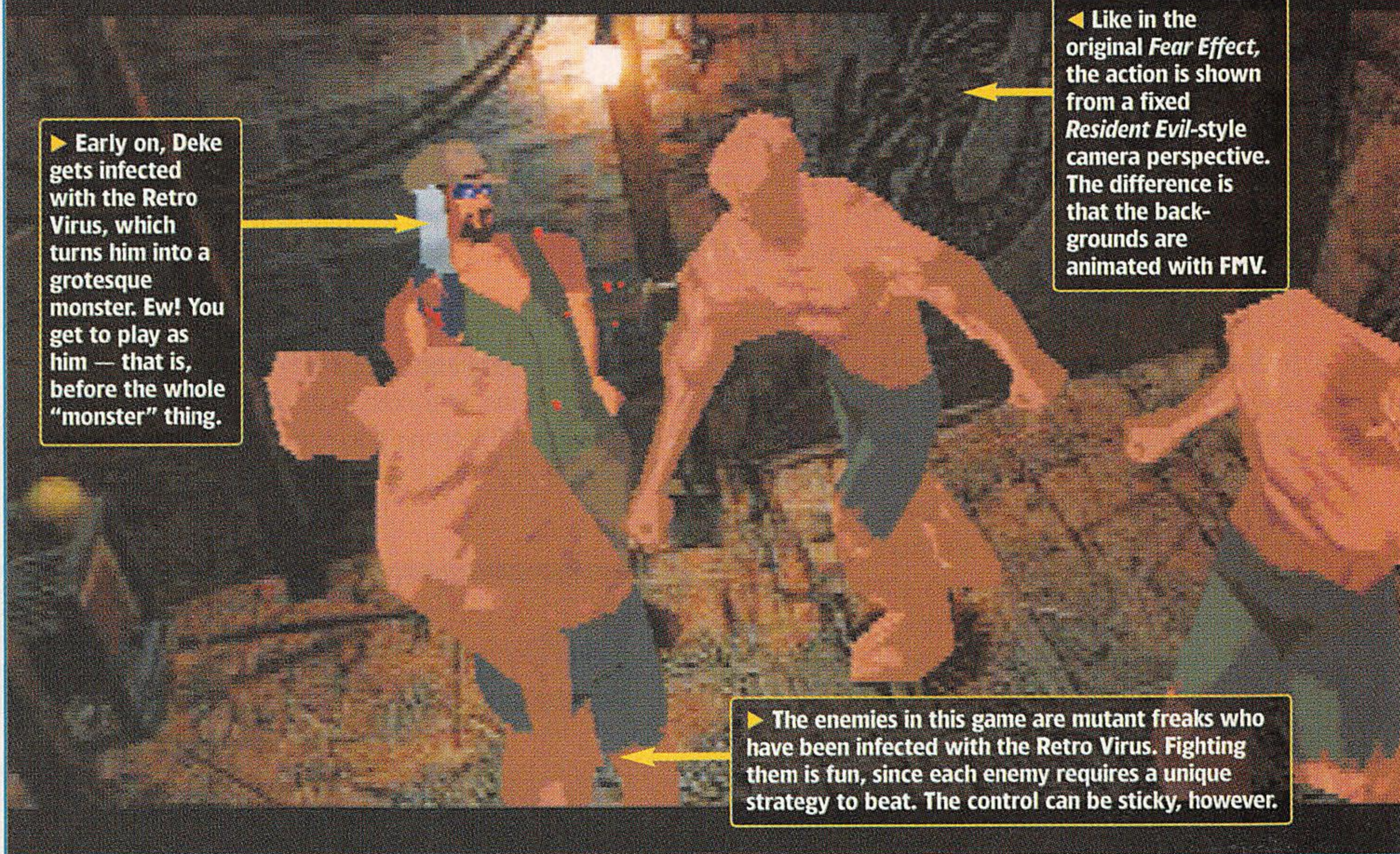


▲ The frustrating circuit puzzle really pissed me off!
▼ This mini game plays out like a board game.



PSM BREAKDOWN

An up-close look at the game in action



► Early on, Deke gets infected with the Retro Virus, which turns him into a grotesque monster. Ew! You get to play as him — that is, before the whole "monster" thing.

◀ Like in the original *Fear Effect*, the action is shown from a fixed *Resident Evil*-style camera perspective. The difference is that the backgrounds are animated with FMV.

► The enemies in this game are mutant freaks who have been infected with the Retro Virus. Fighting them is fun, since each enemy requires a unique strategy to beat. The control can be sticky, however.

“Besides being a quality title overall, FE2 is about as adult a game as you'll ever see on PlayStation”

that presented problems, especially the circuit puzzle. To me, some of the hints were just way too obscure and subtle. Second, some of the enemies and bosses were extremely unfair. The last boss, in particular, had some very cheap attacks. Finally, while the controls sufficed, both control schemes (*Resident Evil* and 3D

styles) still feel flawed. On many occasions, I died as result of fighting with the controls.

Nevertheless, these faults don't detract too much from the experience. If you're looking for something to play until you can find a PS2, look no further!

► Tokoya

PSM
FINAL SCORE

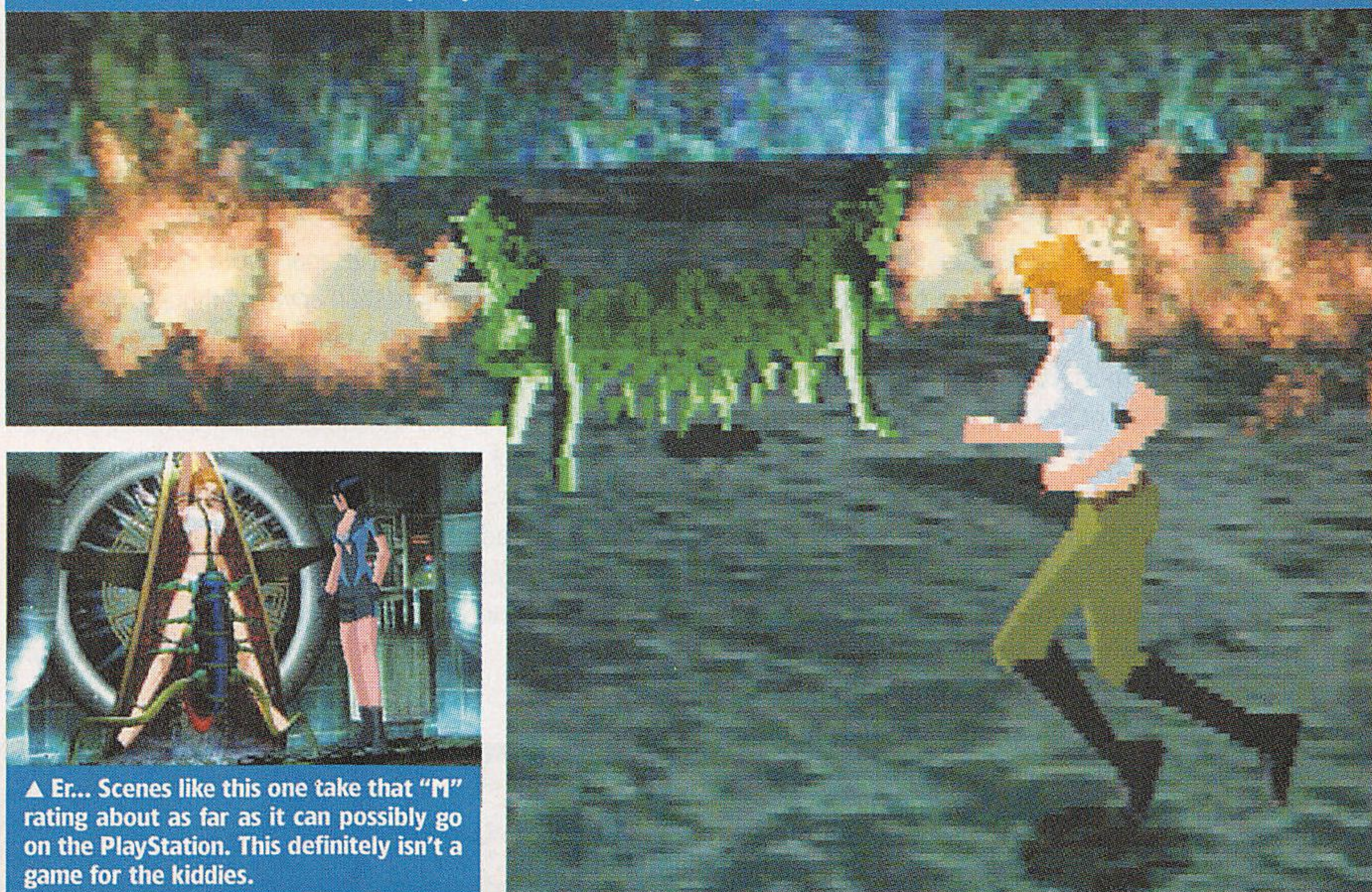
8/10

VERY GOOD

This is a great sequel! Although it suffers from some minor flaws, they don't hinder the overall experience.

PSM
MUST-BUY

▼ The bosses are wild, and can be pretty difficult. Each is very unique, and add a lot to the twisted nature of this game.



▲ Er... Scenes like this one take that "M" rating about as far as it can possibly go on the PlayStation. This definitely isn't a game for the kiddies.

PS	TYPE	PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	# OF PLAYERS	# OF DISCS	ESRB RATING
	RPG	TAKE 2	DELPHINE	1	1 CD	TEEN

DARKSTONE

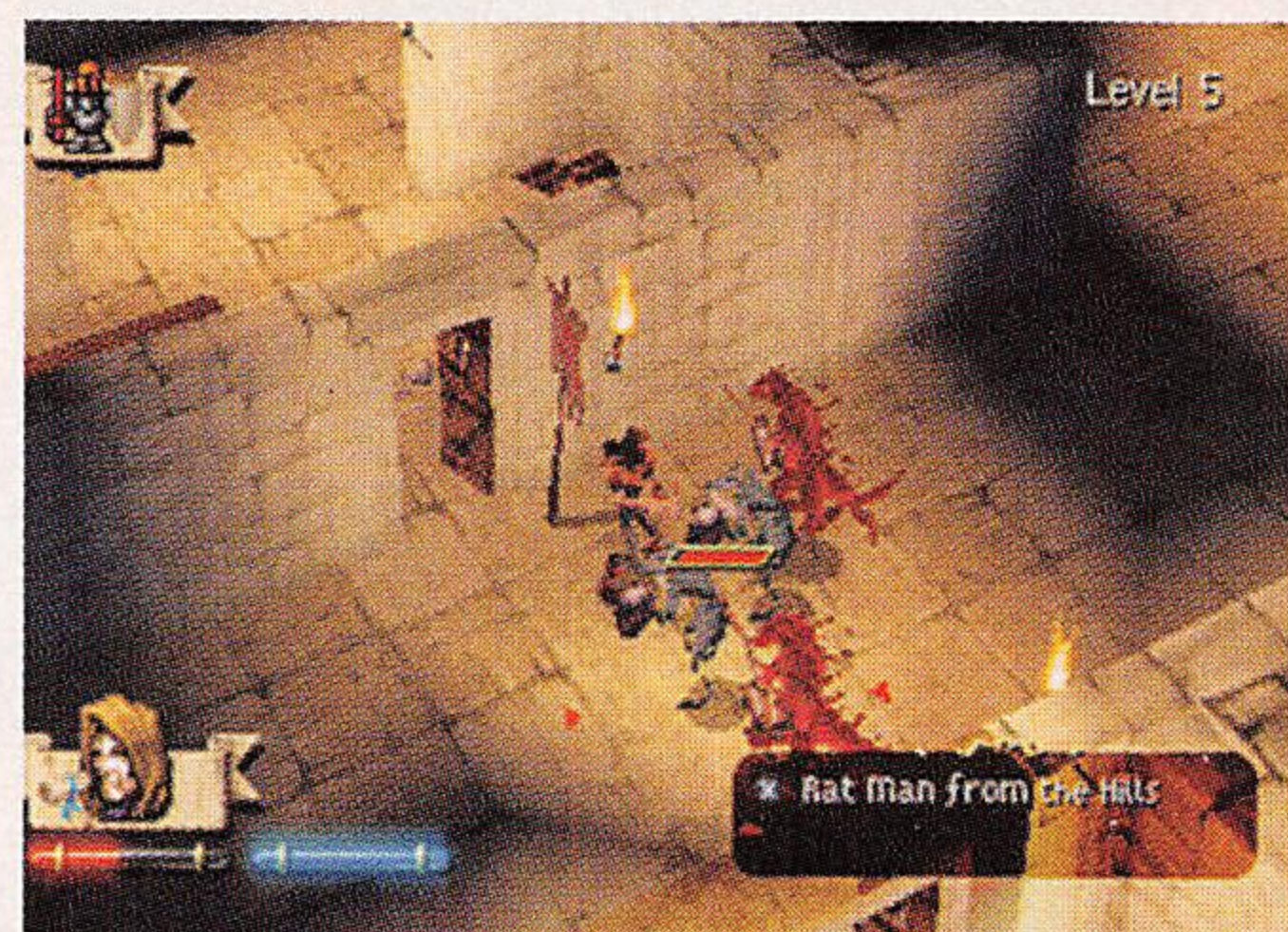
By now, many of you are well acquainted with Take 2's "Got Game" value line. In your infinite wisdom, you made their \$10 *Spec Ops: Stealth Patrol* one of the top sellers for much of 2000. You can now have a final romp with a solid, completely replayable PlayStation RPG for roughly the same price as a movie.

Delphine's RPG *Darkstone* makes its way to PSone with many of the features that made it great on PC. The story is a familiar one: An evil necromancer-turned-dragon, Draak, drowns a world in darkness and chaos, and you must recombine the Seven Crystals to form the Time Orb that will end his reign. In the style of *Diablo*, flavored somewhat by *Gauntlet*'s melee combat and incessant confrontations with enemies, you'll spend hours exploring the surface, caves, castles, and dungeons completing various quests. A fully rotating and zooming camera and a simplistic map system like that of the original *Legend of Zelda* on NES

make navigating the 3D game world a pleasure. *Darkstone*'s 30 armor and weapon types, 32 spells, 200-plus enemies, and ample interaction with NPCs make for satisfying depth. And replayability is through the roof. Your choice of a male or female character from warrior, wizard, thief and priest classes, takes on a randomly generated game world topology with eight primary quests and 20 optional quests that change with each game.

Darkstone is a solid port of a quality PC RPG for a measly \$10. At this price point, you can't afford not to play this one.

► Tommy Layton



▲ *Darkstone* combines the style of *Diablo* with *Gauntlet*'s incessant melee combat, at a very attractive price!

PSM
FINAL SCORE **8/10**

VERY GOOD
A very attractive price, and loads of replayability make *Darkstone* a must-have RPG. Get this one!

PSM
MUST-BUY

PS	TYPE	PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	# OF PLAYERS	# OF DISCS	ESRB RATING
	PUZZLE	AI GAMES	AI GAMES	1-2	1 CD	EVERYONE

PUZZLE STAR SWEEP

Every time another damn *Tetris*-style puzzle game manages to sneak into our office, I rarely give it a second look, doubting its quality in the face of the greatest puzzle game ever made: *Puzzle Fighter*. Although *Puzzle Fighter* still remains my favorite, I must give credit where it is due. *Puzzle Star Sweep* is a solid and addictive title set at a great price (\$10).

The object is simple: match up the sparkling ends of the same colored rectangles to make them disappear. With an object this basic, however, any puzzle game would quickly become boring without a variety of gameplay modes. Fortunately, players can compete against computer opponents in Story Mode; go head to head against a friend in Versus Mode; eliminate obstacles in one player mode; or, complete a variety of objectives in Attack Mode such as Combo or Time Attack. In addition, if you progress far

enough, you'll be treated to two different Bonus Modes. While every mode is quite enjoyable, the most addictive ones have to be Story and Versus.

My only complaints are with the boring and uninspired character designs, and the game's simplicity — there are absolutely no other objects to deal with except the rectangles. While these aren't detrimental faults for a puzzle game, it's a shame since they could have been corrected easily. Nevertheless, with a mere \$10 price, *Puzzle Star Sweep* is absolutely worth buying.

► Tokoya



▲ Just drop the colored rectangles with their sparkling ends facing each other to make them disappear.

PSM
FINAL SCORE **8/10**

VERY GOOD
This is an addictive puzzle game. Since it only costs \$10, it's a must buy for just about everyone.

PSM
MUST-BUY

PS	TYPE	PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	# OF PLAYERS	# OF DISCS	ESRB RATING
	SHOOTER	AI GAMES	SUCCESS	1-2	1 CD	EVERYONE

STARFIGHTER SANVEIN

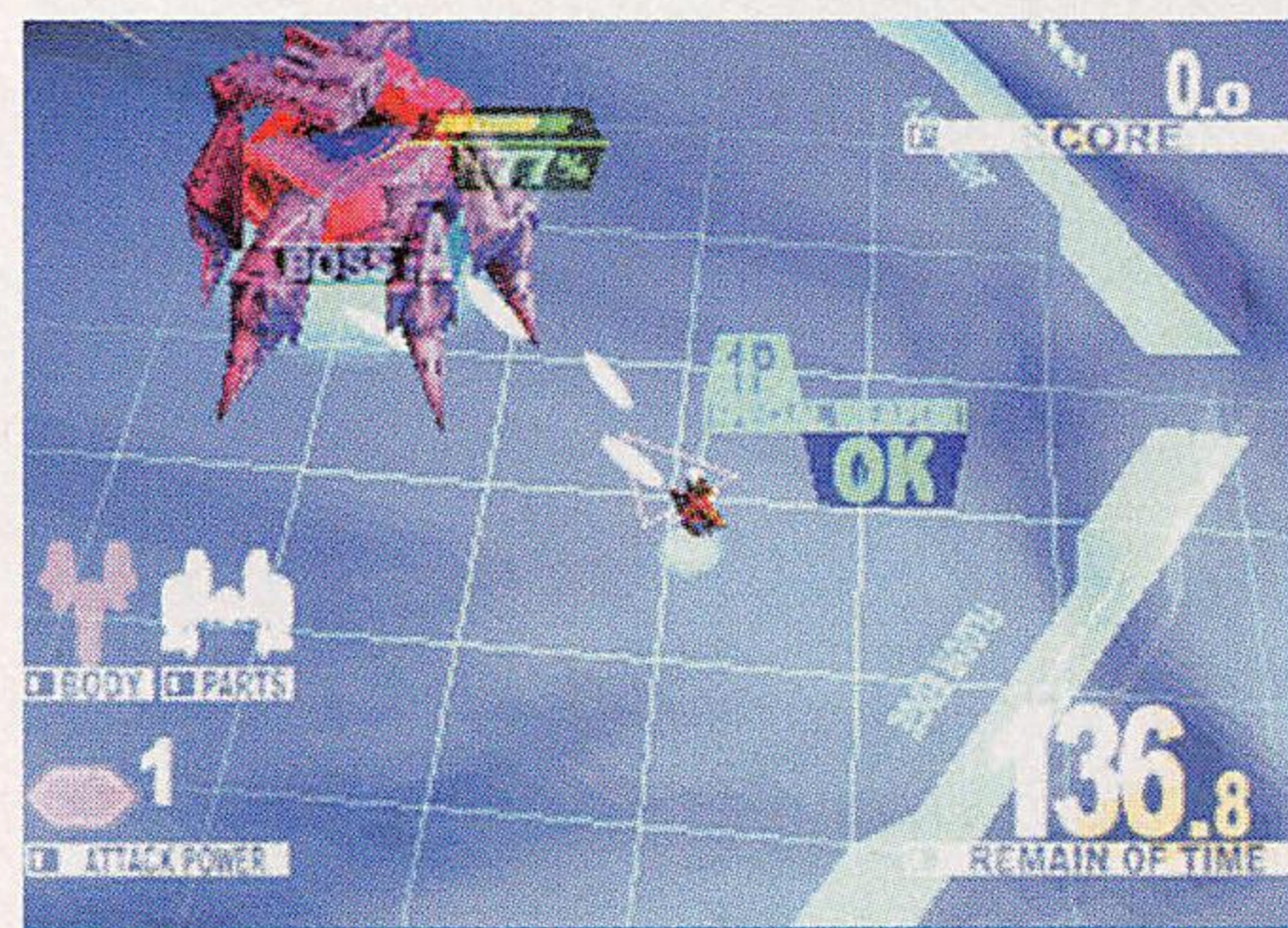
While it's true that *Starfighter Sanvein* has surprisingly good graphics for a bargain bin title, it's clear from the get-go that the game was never intended to deliver much bang for the buck on the gameplay front. That's not to say it's an awful game; it just doesn't really attempt to be anything special.

Once you get past the over-the-top explosions and wire-frame effects, it's plain to see that there's no real level design to speak of (as all combat unfolds in identical, sometimes eye-straining arenas) and that, more so than most shooters, it's extremely repetitive. Then there's the fact that while you're given several combinations of ship bodies and special attacks to mix-and-match before blasting off into battle, only one combination — the default, no less — is really effective against enemies.

Obviously, no one's going to expect a ground-breaking shooter for \$10, but at least it could offer something

remotely interesting to set it apart from countless others that came before it. More than anything though, it's just not that fun. And unlike PSone's better shooters, no one's going to be clamoring for a sequel. Games like *Einhander* and *Thunderforce V* can be had for the same \$10 in most used game bins, making them a much better choice for new PSone owners with a taste for some blasting action. If you've played the system's shooter lineup to death though, and you simply must have something more, consider this one with caution.

► Randy Nelson



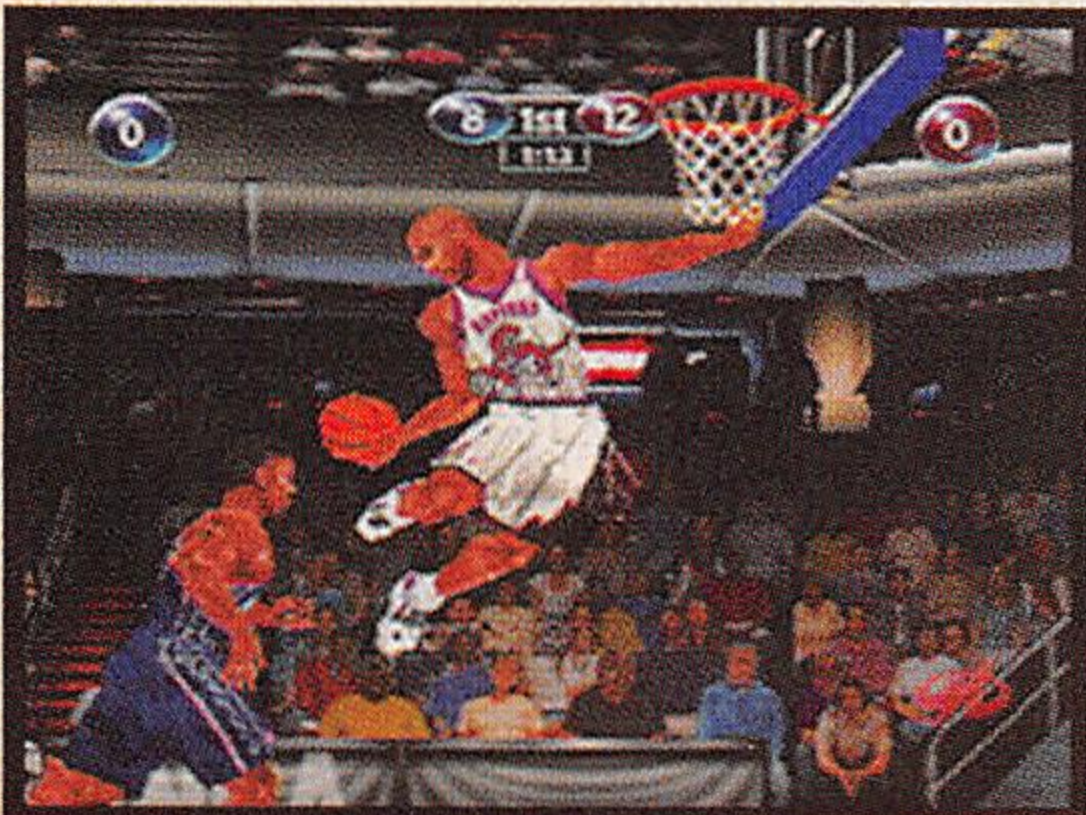
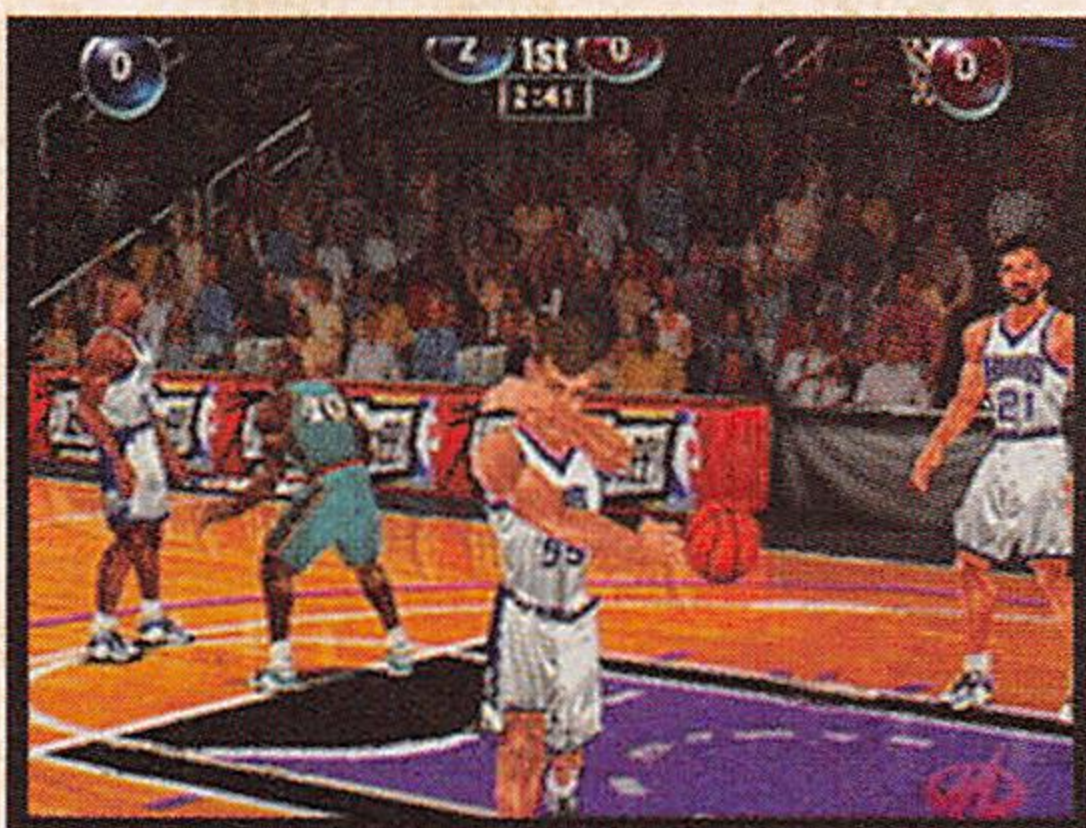
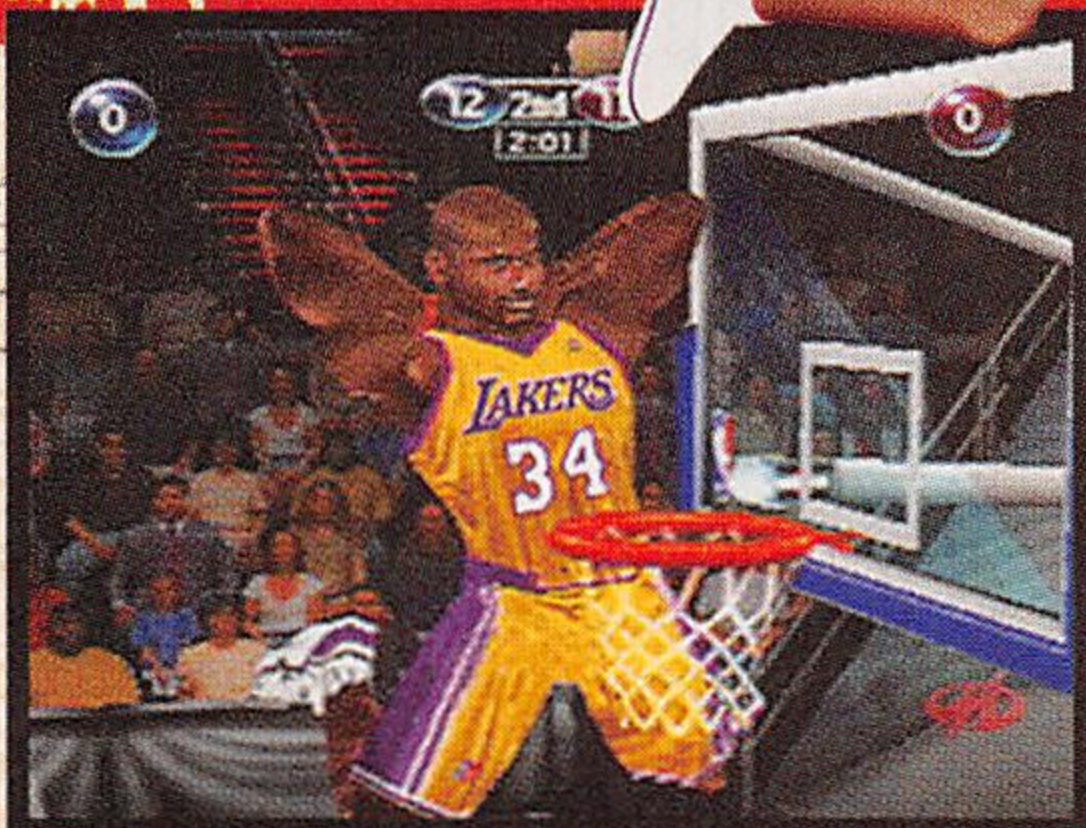
▲ All flash and little substance, *Starfighter Sanvein* really doesn't offer anything special on the gameplay front.

PSM
FINAL SCORE **4/10**

LACKING
You get what you pay for, and in this case that means a game that really doesn't have the level design or gameplay innovation to go toe-to-toe with the rest of the shooters on PSone.

THE RESULTS DON'T SHOW UP ON A SCOREBOARD.
TRY THE RICHTER SCALE.

90° 85° 80° 75° 70° 65°



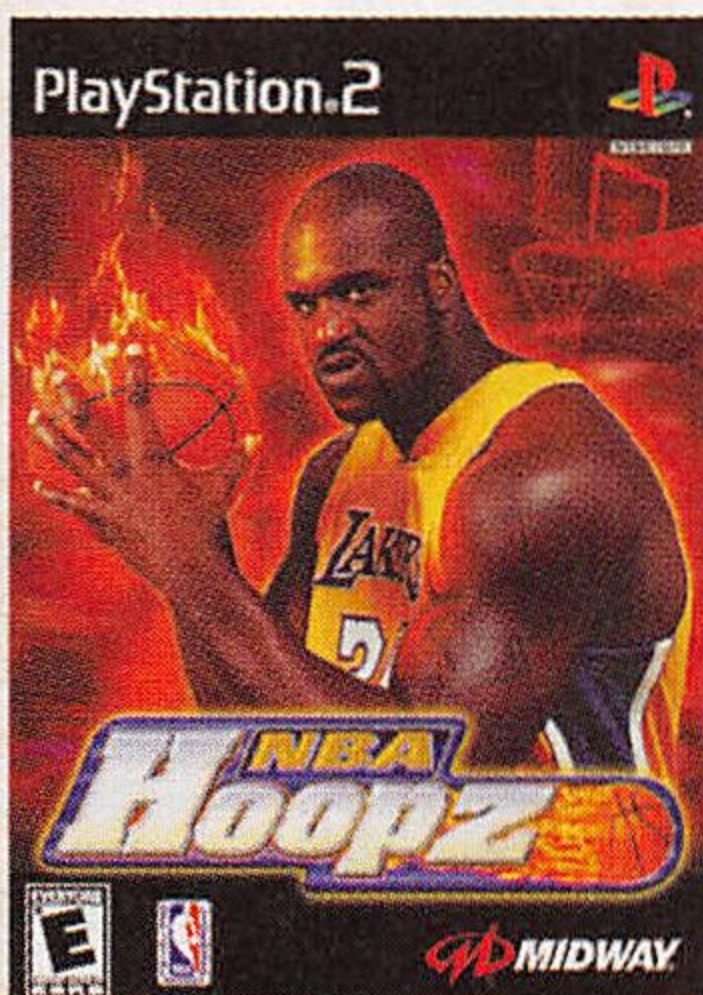
Torment friends with our revolutionary new savable instant replay feature.

Get skillz playing in mini-games like Hoopz Practice and 2ball.

We motion captured Shaq-Diesel's MVP moves for your rim-rattling pleasure.

Use the new Hoopz button to make sure the rock will end up in your hands.

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EXTREME-STYLE BASKETBALL GAME
this season.



PlayStation®2



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▲ From the start of this game to whichever of the five endings you meet, the characters and storyline will pull you into *Shadow of Destiny*. You'll want to play it over and over again.

SHADOW OF DESTINY

Time-traveling that anyone can enjoy

With games like *Z.O.E.* out soon and *Metal Gear Solid 2* coming out later this year, Konami looks to be on a very hot streak. Its latest adventure title, *Shadow of Destiny*, continues that streak and presents you with a rather interesting premise: What would you do if someone gave you the ability to prevent your own death? That's exactly the question put before Eike Kusch, our young, blond-haired hero. Somebody's got a major

grudge against him and is looking to take him out at every turn. In a strange twist, Eike gains the ability to travel back in time, which allows him to change the present and hopefully, prevent his own murders. The challenge, and major focus of the game, is figuring out what exactly to do in order to prevent a visit by the Grim Reaper. Fortunately, along the way, Eike will come across a cast of refreshingly original characters that will help him out.

While I would highly rate this title just on its implementation and visual design alone, there is one aspect of it that truly shines; its endings. In this day and age, it seems that game endings have been left by the wayside. No longer do they seem to be there to award the player or provide a concrete conclusion to a storyline. Rather they're often abrupt, make no



▲ Check with the fortune teller often, as she will provide you with valuable information and tips.

sense or are simply predictable. Fortunately, I can say none of these are the case with *Shadow of Destiny*. Konami has, by far, outdone itself and created five different endings that will shock, surprise and amaze you. And that's how it's supposed to be. You'll want to play through the game over and over again just to unlock them all.

All I can say is that this is easily one of the more enjoyable experiences currently available on the PS2, and I hope that all you adventure fans out there give it a try. It may have a few problems, such as an inconsistent camera system, and be a bit short, but I can honestly promise you that you'll enjoy *Shadow of Destiny* for every moment you're playing it. Even casual gamers won't have a problem coming to grips with the controls or the puzzles. And that, in itself, is a sure sign of a well-designed game.

► **Stephen Frost**



▲ To make things easier for novice players, there's a glow around items that you can interact with.

I can honestly promise you that you'll enjoy *Shadow of Destiny* for every moment you're playing it.



▲ There's a lot of attention spent on the little details. Everything from the trees to the shadows looks great.

PSM
FINAL SCORE **8/10**

VERY GOOD
With its novel premise and intuitive control, *SOD* is sure to please both novice and veteran gamers.

PSM
MUST-BUY

PS2

TYPE
ACTION

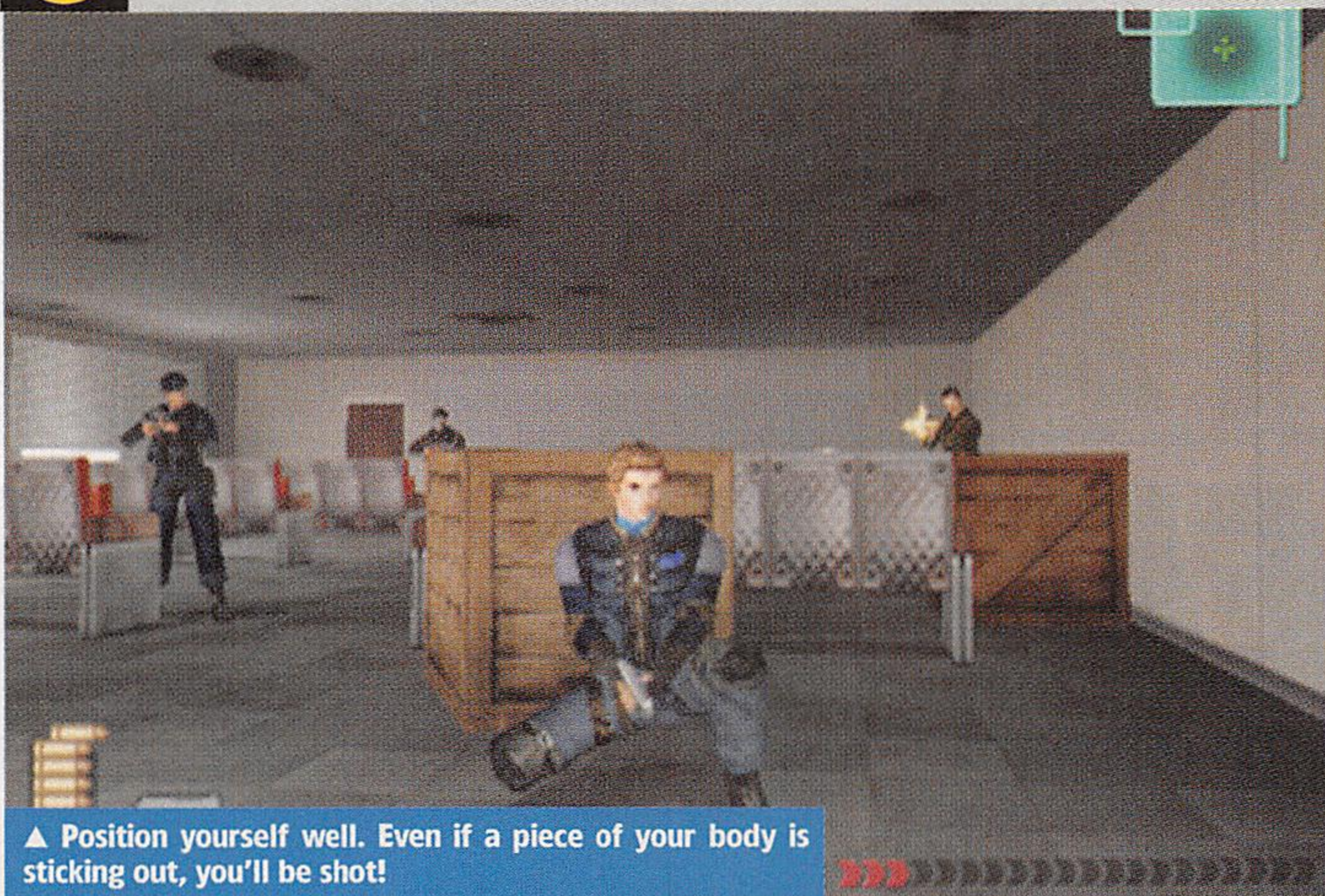
PUBLISHER
KOEI

DEVELOPER
OMEGA FORCE

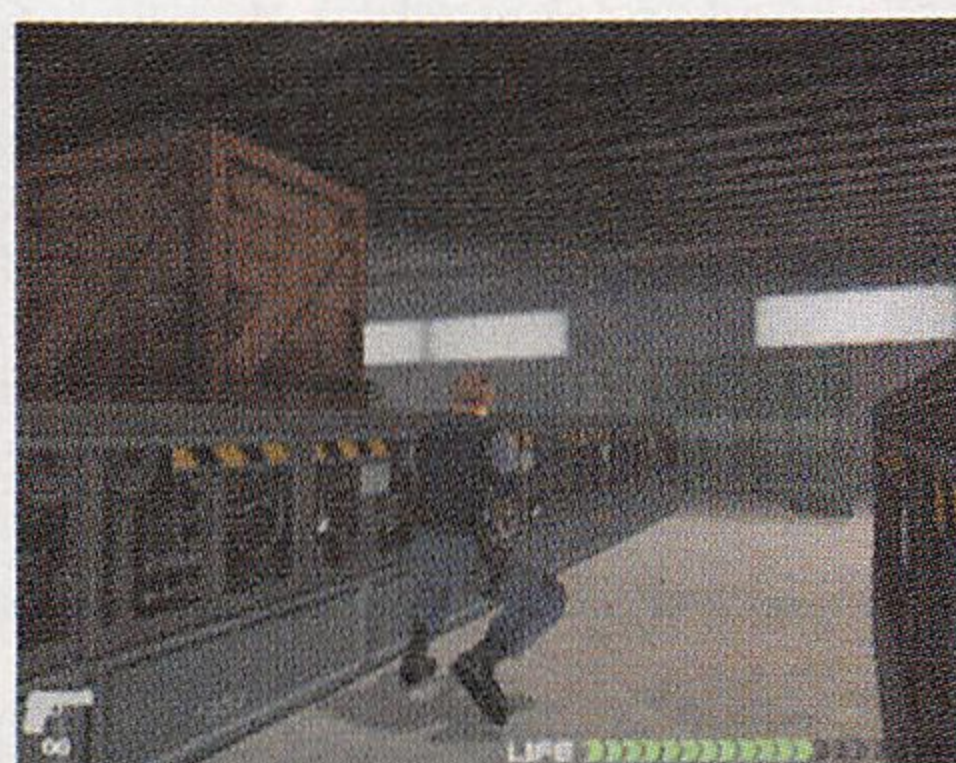
OF PLAYERS
1-2

OF DISCS
1 DVD

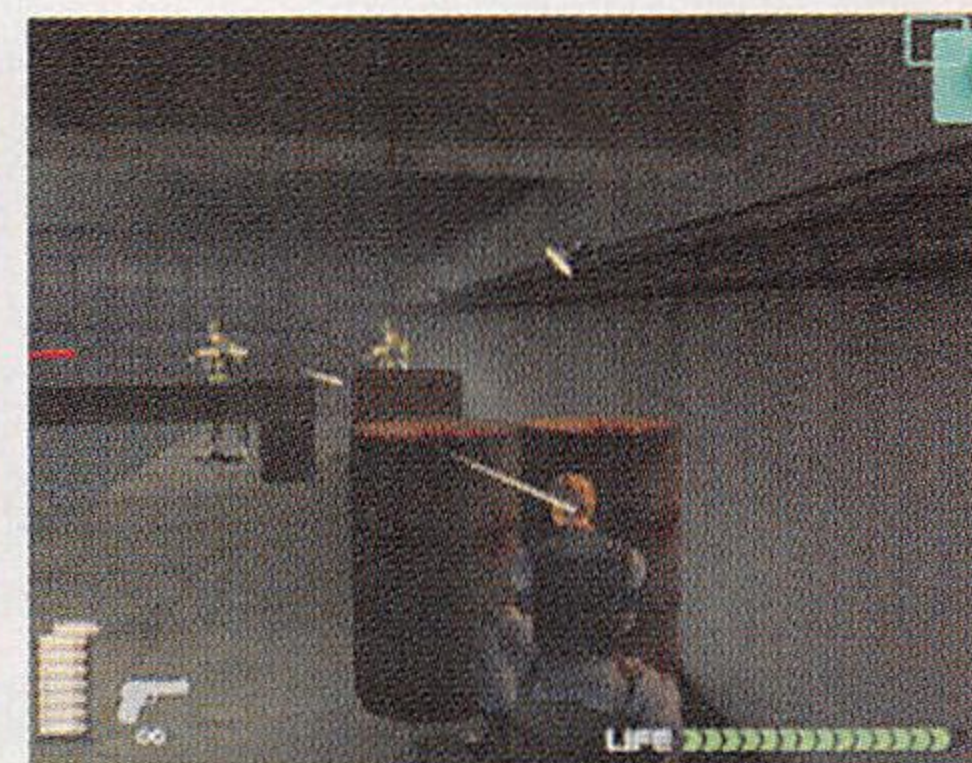
ESRB RATING
TEEN



▲ Position yourself well. Even if a piece of your body is sticking out, you'll be shot!



▲ Sneaking around behind boxes is important in ambushing the enemy.



▲ Firefights like these are a blast. Quick thinking is important, though.

"It's good enough to satisfy our appetite until MGS 2 arrives"

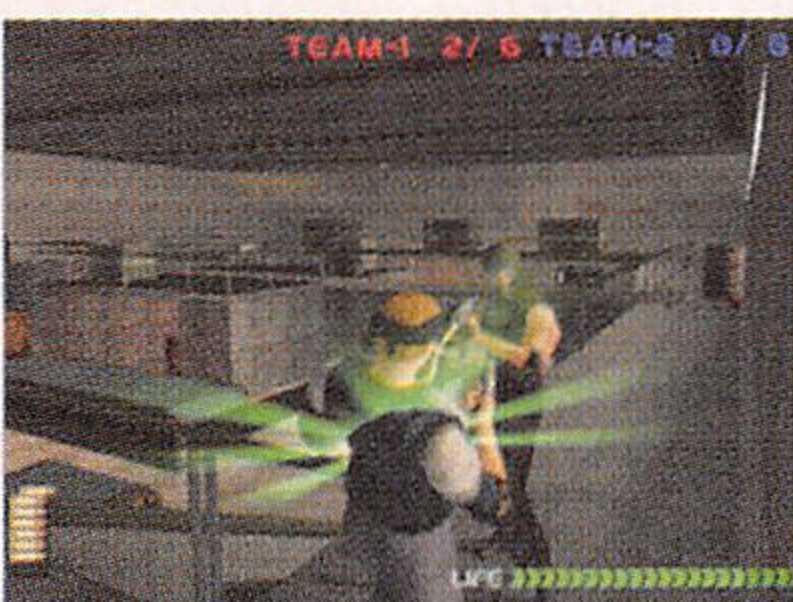
WINBACK: COVERT OPS

The closest thing to Metal Gear!

Ever since *MGS*'s debut, I have come to love games involving covert operations and other spy stuff.

There were certainly games preceding *MGS* that featured lots of sneaking around and spying, but none of them seemed to capture the spirit of covert tactics as accurately. While *Winback* cannot compare to *MGS*, it manages to mimic this precedent set by *MGS* fairly well.

Indeed, sneaking around corners, hiding behind boxes, and using the silencer will become commonplace, if you wish to remain alive. Making a lot of noise, or sloppily moving around in enemy territory may attract more enemies than you can handle.



▲ This is like an FPS deathmatch mode, but in third person.

Even if you find yourself caught in a firefight, it's not a bad thing. The strategic combat system is definitely one of *Winback*'s main strengths. Most of the time, your focus will be on finding an advantageous position, choosing an appropriate weapon, and ducking.

Despite *Winback*'s strengths, it does suffer from a few problems. First, while the control is manageable, moving the camera around feels a bit sluggish. This sometimes results

in unfair deaths. Second, while the story itself isn't necessarily bad, it's just too typical. Finally, the lack of enough weapons and other gameplay elements cause *Winback* to feel a bit repetitive in later levels.

While *Winback* may not be on par with *MGS*, it's good enough to satisfy our appetite until *MGS 2* arrives.

► Tokoya

HOW IT STACKS UP

1	► Metal Gear Solid (PS)	10 out of 10
2	► Covert Ops (PS)	8 out of 10
3	► Syphon Filter (PS)	8 out of 10
4	► Winback: Covert Ops (PS2)	7 out of 10
5	► Oni (PS)	5 out of 10

PSM
FINAL SCORE **7**/10

GOOD

Winback is a fun game with seemingly realistic combat situations. Although it's lacking in a couple of areas, gamers that enjoy covert operations should give it a try, at least until *MGS2* is released.

July 2001

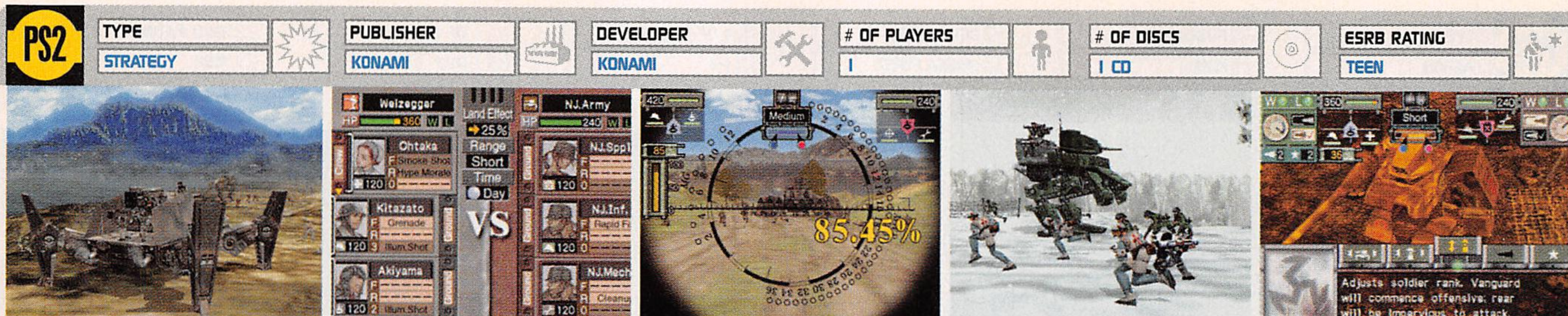
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PlayStation®2



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▲ The beautiful graphics will catch your attention and the depth will keep you hooked for weeks. One might be tempted to call *Ring Of Red* a true mech sim instead of a game.

RING OF RED

Mech combat comes to the front lines

Out of seemingly nowhere, Konami has come out of the background and quickly become one of the major players on the PlayStation 2. Both *Shadow of Destiny* and *Z.O.E.* have ended up great and *Metal Gear Solid* is looking simply amazing. Adding to that trio of quality is *Ring of Red*, a mech strategy game that shares a lot in

common with Square's own *Front Mission* series.

While the initial storyline of *RoR* is a bit basic (you're attempting to get back a stolen mech), the mech designs and mission structure are at the top of their class. There are also some other key differences that helps this game stand out of the crowd. First off, character dialog (for the most part) is actually interesting and does a good job of moving the plot along. The selection of mechs available to you is rather high, and helps to keep things fresh. That's due to the fact that you're always learning new and better ways to use them in battle. And lastly, there's actually quite a bit more depth to be found in this title than most others. You can "blame" that on the rather interesting direction that Konami took the combat system.

HOW IT STACKS UP

1	► Final Fantasy Tactics (PS)	8 out of 10
2	► Ring Of Red (PS2)	8 out of 10
3	► Front Mission 3 (PS)	7 out of 10
4	► Vanguard Bandits (PS)	6 out of 10
5	► Ogre Battle (PS)	6 out of 10

"The strategy genre is a bit lacking on the PS2, but *Ring of Red* fills the void rather nicely"



▲ *Front Mission* fans will notice a lot of similarities in *Ring of Red*, especially in the map screen. Outstanding!

Instead of selecting a specific attack and just watching it happen, you actually feel like you're in the battle. That's because *Ring of Red* forces you to handle everything from the aiming of your weapons to the selecting and positioning of your support troops. You also have to worry about the distance between you and the enemy mech and the terrain differences in between. This may all seem a lot to have to think about, but it's really not. Thanks to a well-designed interface and on-screen information boxes, you always have the data you need to make well-informed decisions. Other games should learn from this.

The strategy genre is a bit lacking on the PS2, but *Ring of Red* fills the void rather nicely. It has all the features that one would expect; plenty of depth, well-detailed visuals and top-notch presentation. If you're a fan of *Front Mission* or similar titles, you won't go wrong with this. It will put a big smile on your face and keep you coming back for more.

► Stephen Frost



▲ Konami spent a lot of time putting plenty of detail into the backgrounds, as well as the mechs.



▲ Part of the strategy is picking and using the best troops for specific situations, just like in real combat.

PSM
FINAL SCORE **8/10**

VERY GOOD
By far, *Ring Of Red* is one of the best strategy titles I've played in a long, long time. Get this one!

PSM
MUST-BUY

AIM IS EVERYTHING.

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TYPE
SPORTSPUBLISHER
A1 GAMESDEVELOPER
D3# OF PLAYERS
1-2# OF DISCS
1 CDESRB RATING
EVERYONE

BOWLING

This game's title pretty much says it all. It's bowling at its most basic, so don't expect any real pro players, lanes, or much in the way of fancy environments. But if you just want to roll a ball down a lane and hit some pins, it's actually not that bad.

All of the basics are here, from a constant on-screen score card to power and accuracy meters. You never see your bowler on-screen — just a constant first-person view of the lane. It also looks pretty good for a PSone game, mostly thanks to the fact that it runs in high-res mode.

When it comes down to the basic meat and potatoes of gameplay, the game's as simplistic as it looks. You just choose how much power you want to give your roll and try to stop the accuracy meter when it's dead center. There is one glaring gameplay oversight though — there's no analog control. This makes lining up tricky attempts at spares tough, since the digital control can be touchy.

Otherwise, it's a functional and decently fun bowling title with some challenging sub-games to boot.

As with most of the emerging budget line games for PSone, be forewarned that you can still find better bowling sims in your game shop's bargain bin for the same price, maybe even cheaper. Heck, even *Tekken Bowling* (a hidden mode in *Tekken Tag Tournament* on PS2) is just as good. But if you just want a basic game of bowling and don't want to go digging, this one's worth a shot.

► Randy Nelson



▲ This bowling game is very simple, but if you just want to have some fun with friends, it's actually okay.

PSM
FINAL SCORE **6/10**

OKAY
It's not a bowling fan's dream come true, but if you just want a quick game with friends it's actually pretty good. Just don't expect a very accurate simulation or any familiar faces.

TYPE
SPORTSPUBLISHER
MIDWAYDEVELOPER
MIDWAY# OF PLAYERS
1-4# OF DISCS
1 CDESRB RATING
EVERYONE

NBA HOOPZ

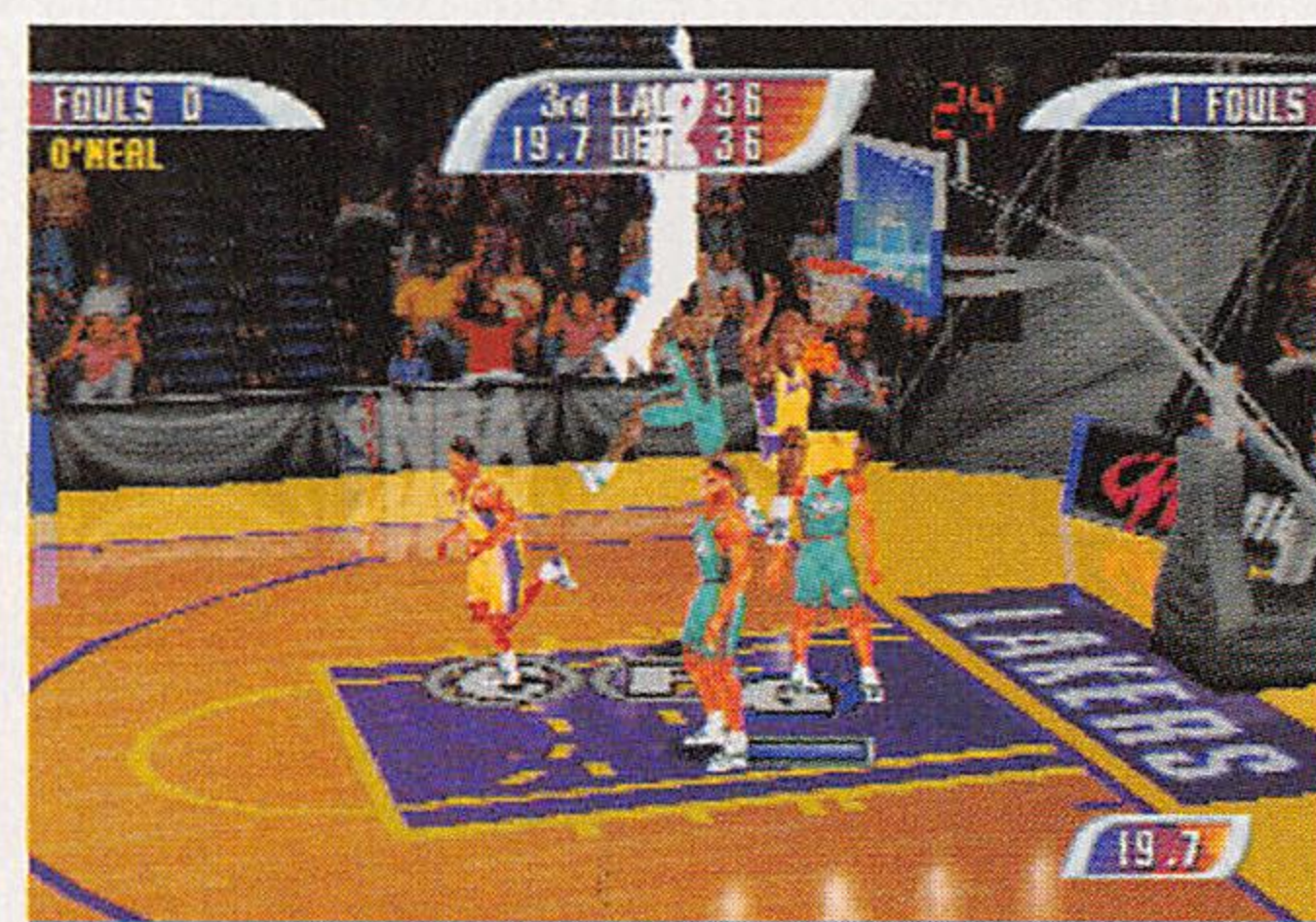
It's not fair to simply say *Hoopz* suckz, but it's not exactly raising the roof, either. Yet another rehashing of the too familiar *NBA Jam* formula, *Hoopz* fails to add anything innovative to the mix. Granted, the 3 vs. 3 game carries with it more passing options than 2 vs. 2, and there's better selection and control of short-range shots and some passes. But after the first few games, the novelty and challenge wear thin, and the formulaic arcade gameplay degenerates into the predictable monotony of scoring back-and-forth.

Poster boy Shaq endorses *Hoopz* with motion captures for the big man moves and his grotesque picture on the package. And he'd approve of the arcade high-flying dunks and the rim and backboard animations, but the absence of ample variation in the play-by-play and the crowd's single reaction to each and every basket fails to establish lasting

excitement. While you can assign players to guard, forward and center positions, the AI for each position does not consistently generate the offensive positioning and defensive coverage that make for creative and effective playing strategies.

Hoopz on PSone includes create-a-team and create-a-player features, and NBA trivia between games, but there are no mini-games, like 2ball, 21 and Around the World, like the PS2 version. *Hoopz* is an uninspired descendant of a formula that has been played to death.

► Tommy Layton



▲ Shaq evens the score while his flashing teammate looks for the Alley-oop. This is just sorry...

PSM
FINAL SCORE **4/10**

LACKING
Although Midway's arcade basketball tradition includes *Hang Time* and *Showtime*, *Hoopz* comes up short on the innovation and presentation that would merit its existence.

TYPE
RACINGPUBLISHER
AGETECDEVELOPER
A1 GAMES# OF PLAYERS
1-2# OF DISCS
1 CDESRB RATING
EVERYONE

RACING

After playing *Puzzle Star Sweep*, I guess I just expected a little too much. Unfortunately, *Racing* is as plain and basic as the title indicates. Actually, it's much worse.

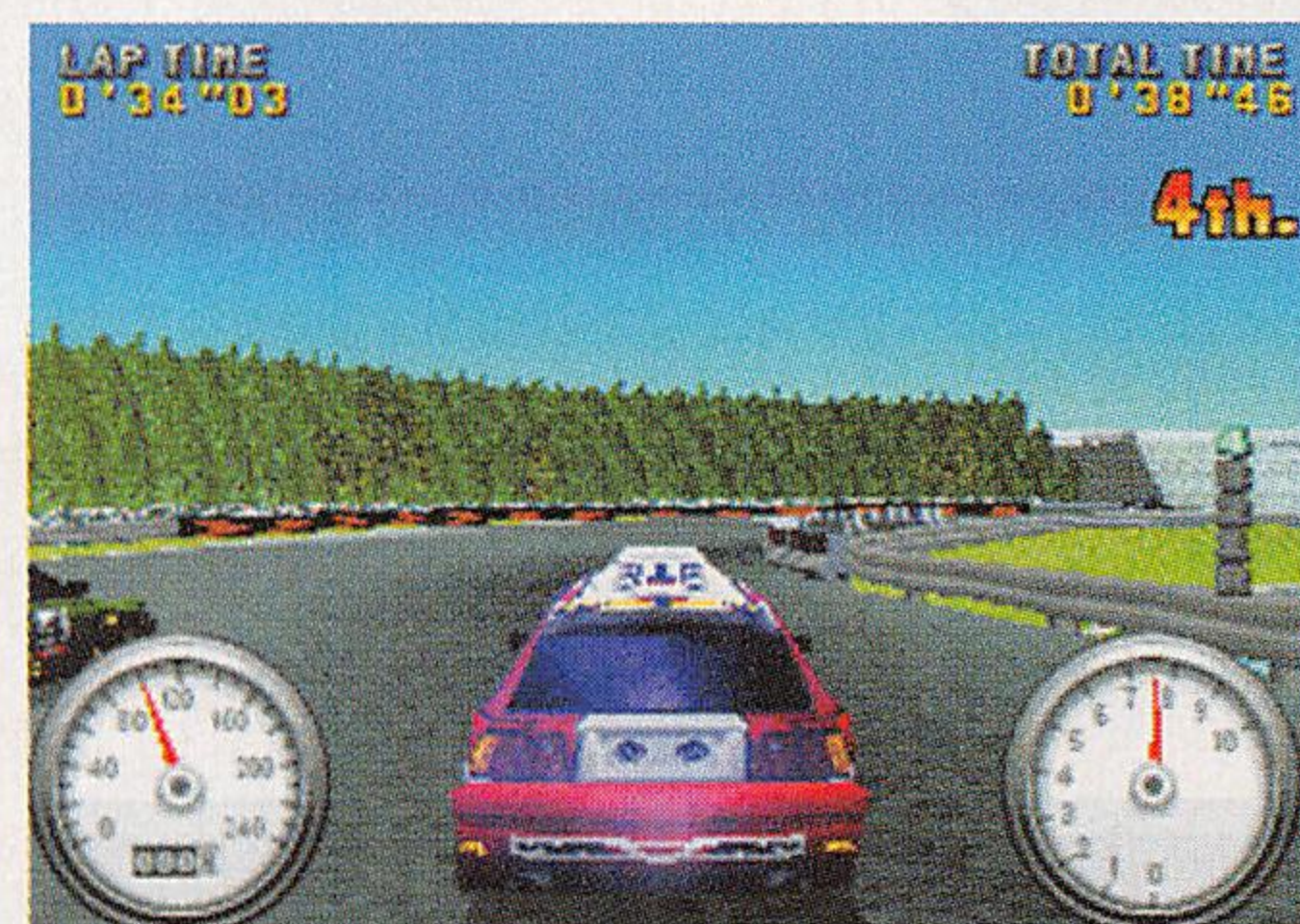
The game's biggest problem is the jittery control and interface. Moving your vehicle around corners often results in a wreck of some sort. And if you happen to collide with a wall, tree, or guard rail, you'll come to a complete stop and remain stuck for a few seconds. The interface with the environment is completely unrealistic and inconsistent. For example, there's no difference between driving in the grass or dirt and driving on the pavement, although sometimes you mysteriously spin out if you ride the shoulders for too long. Also, braking does little more than cause your vehicle to lose control.

The lack of cars, car parts, and tracks also hurts *Racing*. Since it only offers two cars to choose from (Novice and

Pro), absolutely no parts, and two race tracks (Short and Long), it's extremely shallow; I would be surprised if it held any gamer's attention for more than a half hour. Perhaps including a few other gameplay modes, such as Two-Player or Time Attack would breathe a little more life into this already dead product.

With graphics that are laughable even by Saturn standards, there is very little redeeming about this title. Although the \$10 price point may attract a few people, we still cannot recommend *Racing*. Spend the extra \$10 dollars and buy *GT* or *GT2*.

► Tokoya



▲ The graphics are horrible. Since they are full of glitches, your view is sometimes obstructed.

PSM
FINAL SCORE **2/10**

AWFUL
This is one of the saddest PlayStation games that I've ever played. Don't even bother with it for kicks. You should run screaming from this game.



刑期3-5年 "Zero Tolerance" 法で

PlayStation®2

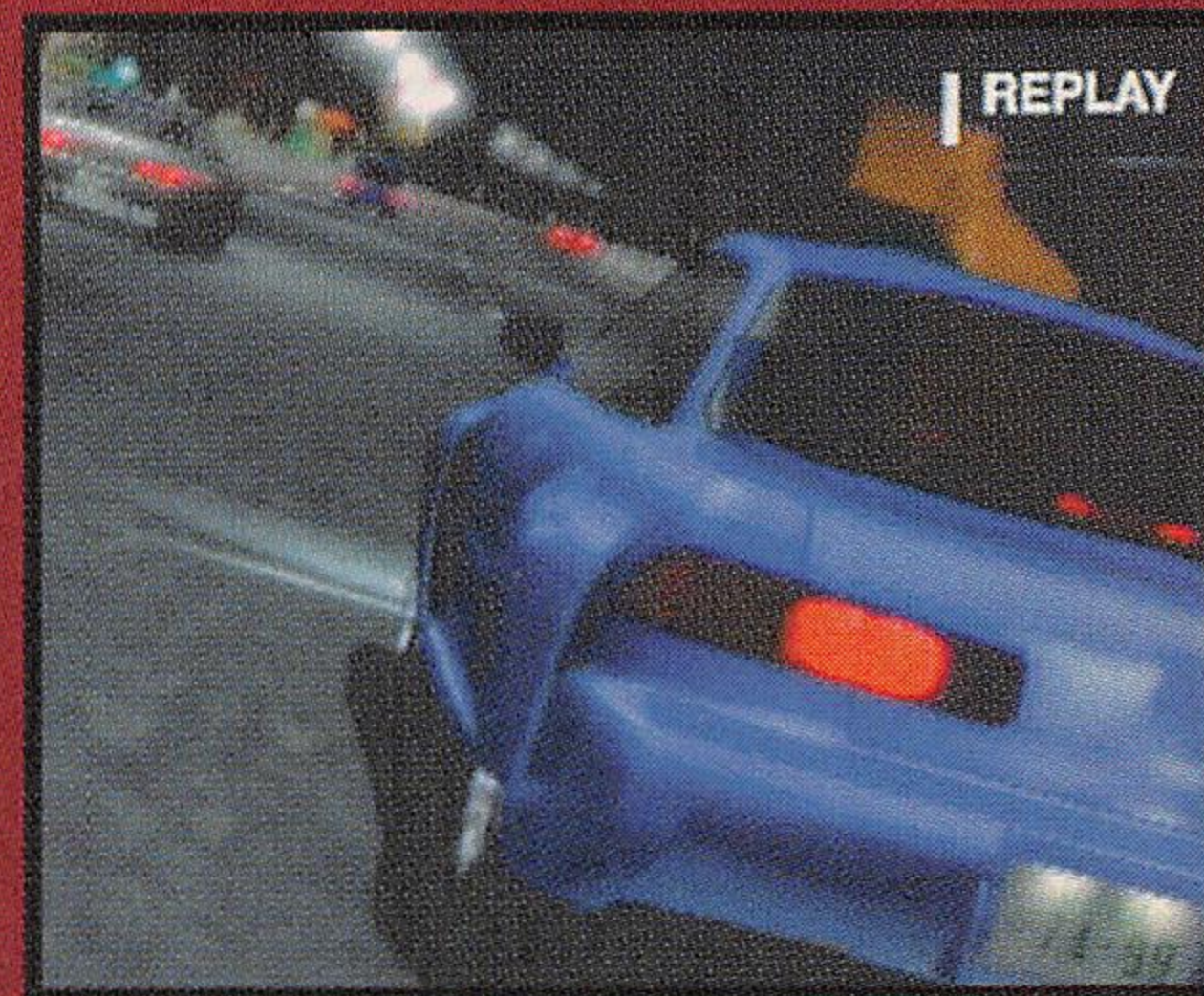


Includes trailer of a film classified as PG-13 by the MPAA

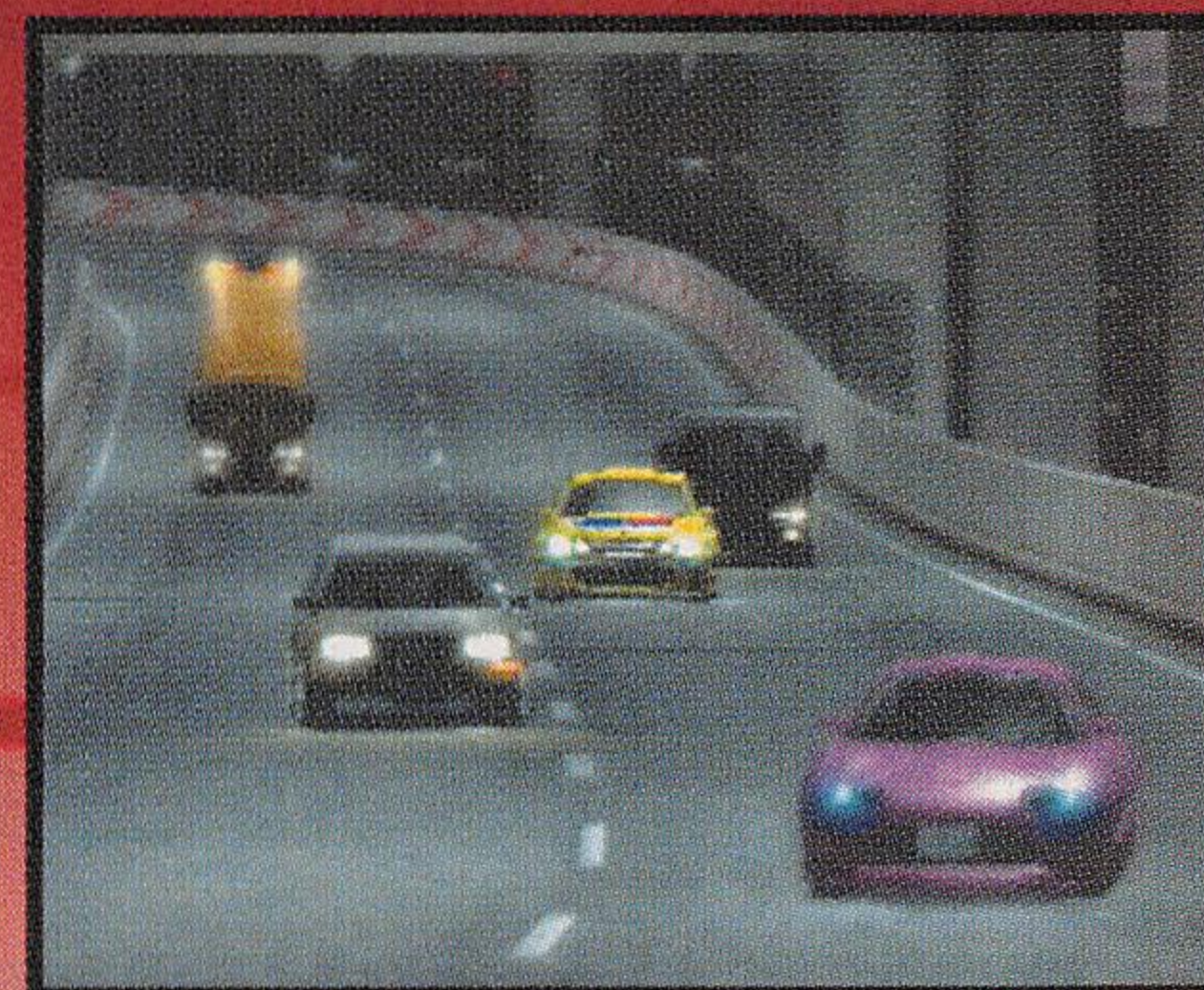
COMING SOON

THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS

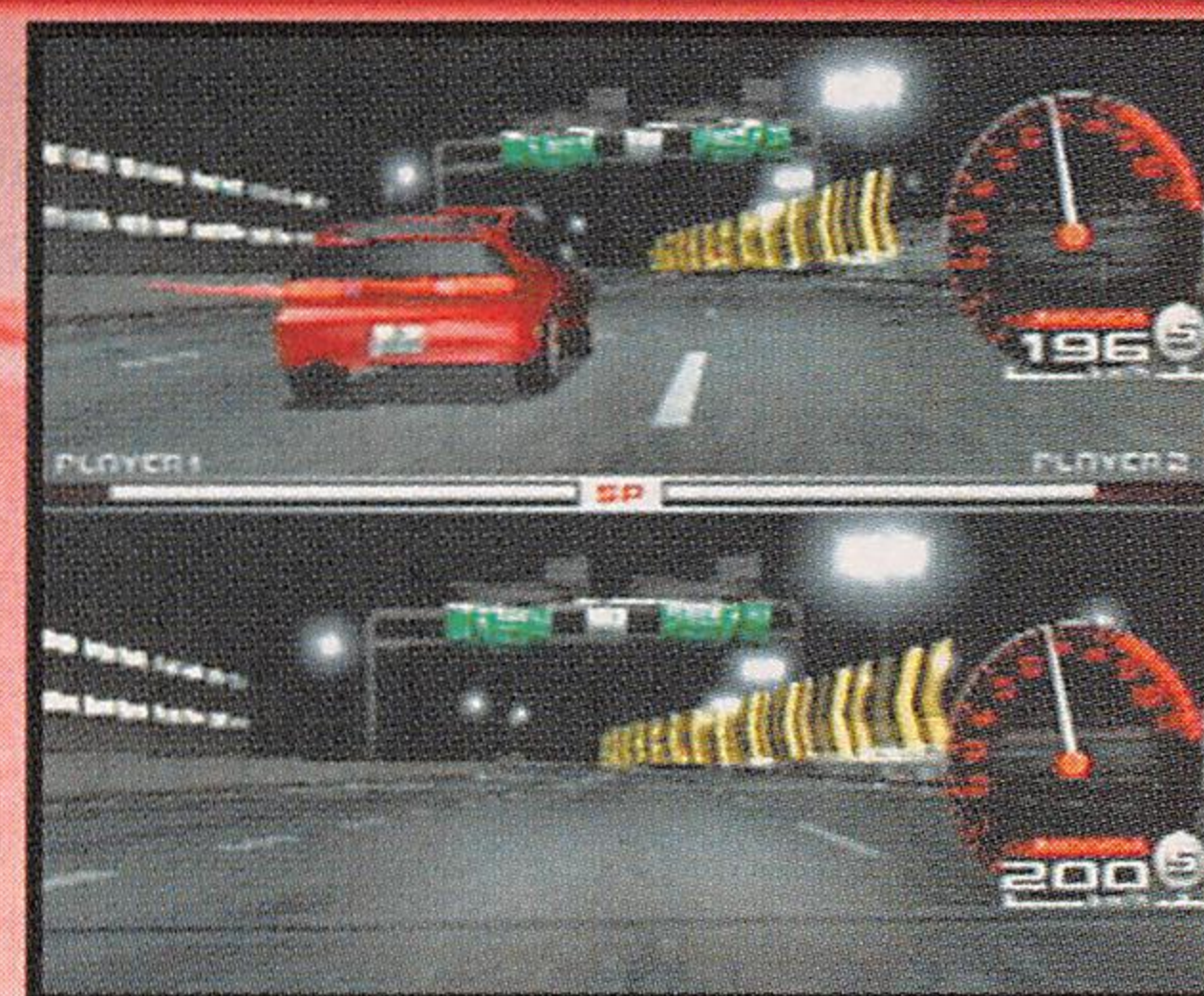
FOR MORE INFORMATION, RACE TO
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Drive over 125 cars which are customizable with over 200 parts



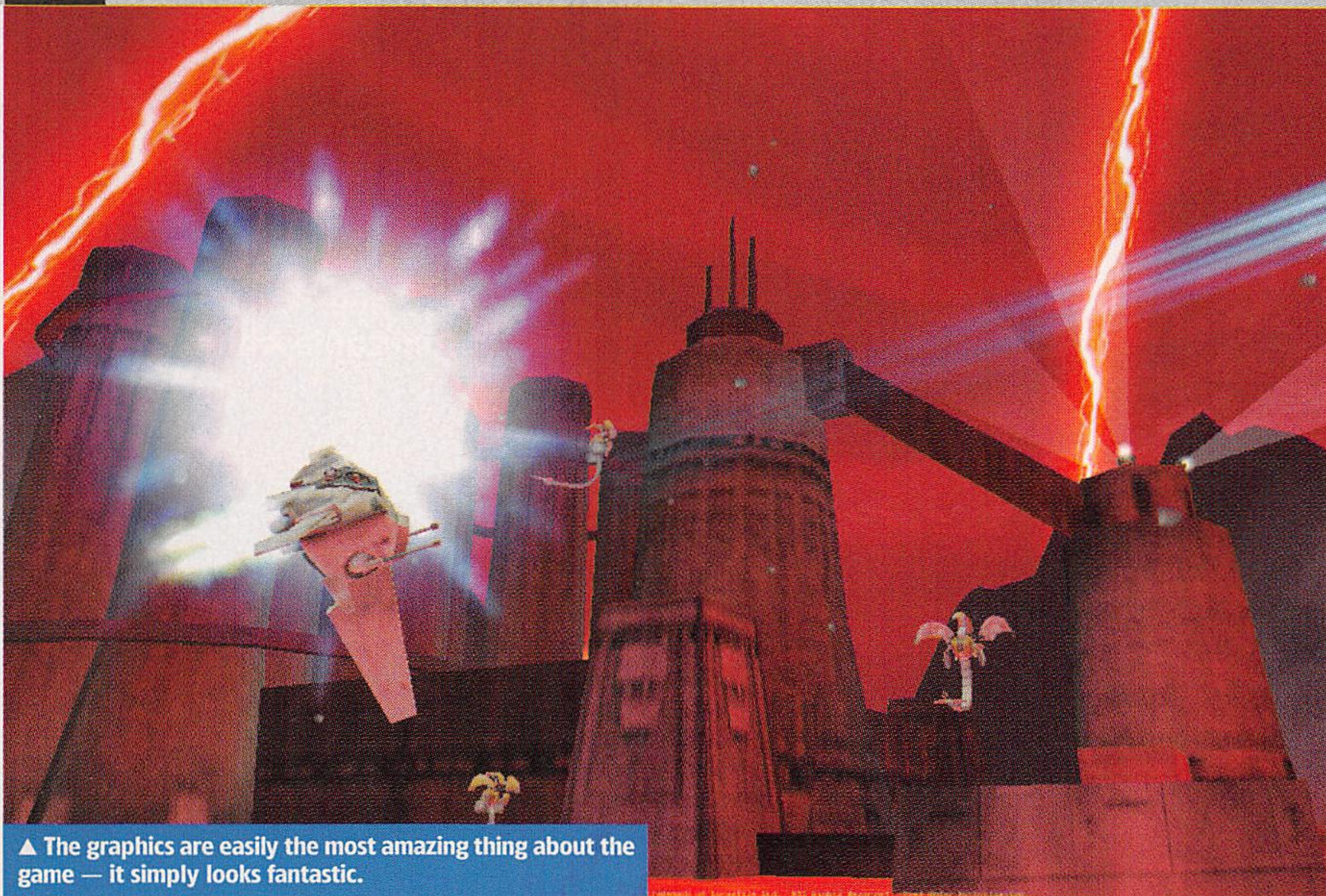
Battle 400 opponents across 100 miles of highly detailed highway



Several play modes including; Quest, Free Run, 2-Player Head-to-Head and Time Attack



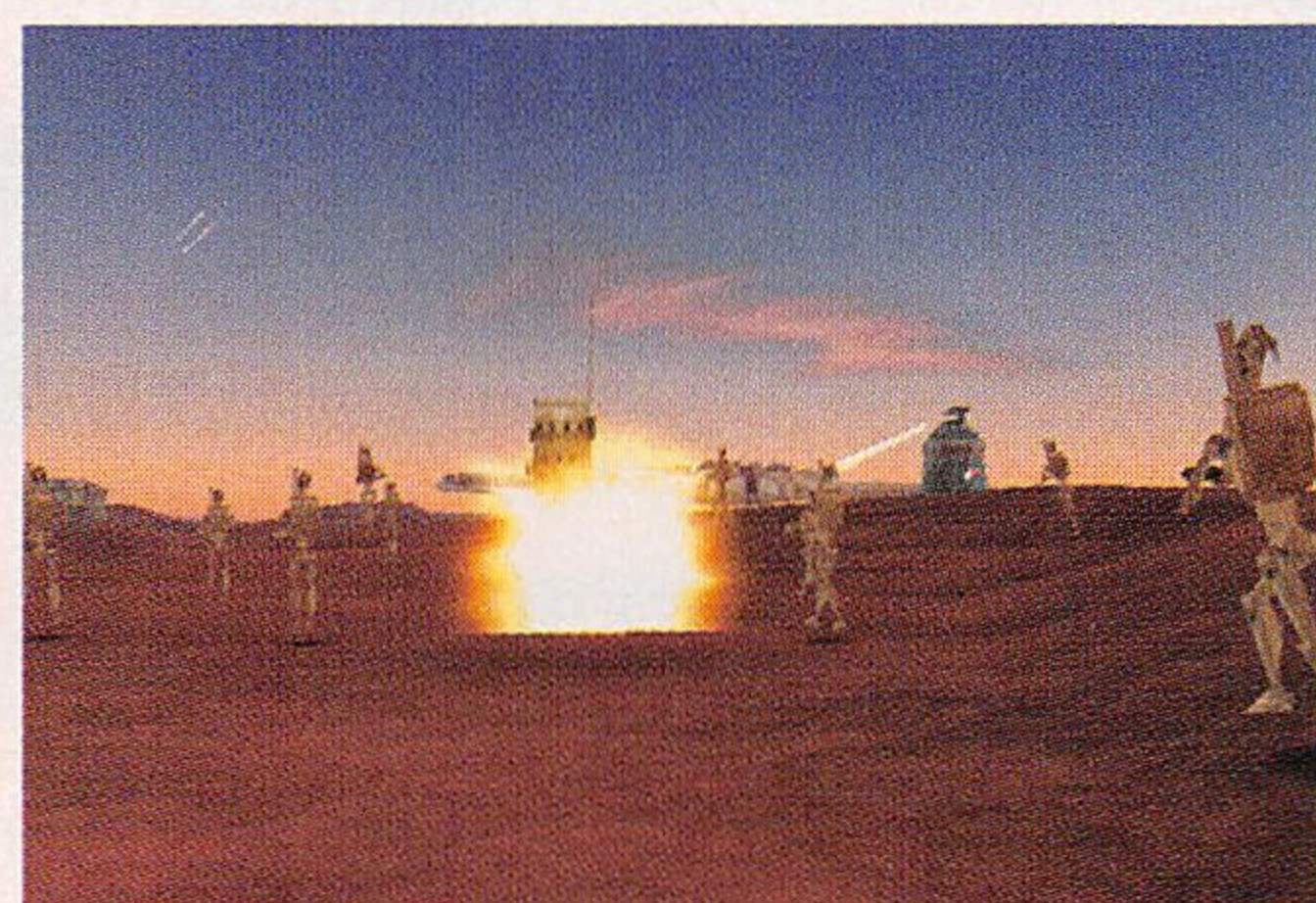
PS2	TYPE	PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	# OF PLAYERS	# OF DISCS	ESRB RATING
	ACTION/FLIGHT SIM	LUCASARTS	LUCASARTS	1-2	1 CD	TEEN



▲ The graphics are easily the most amazing thing about the game — it simply looks fantastic.



▲ *Starfighter* puts you in the cockpit of three different kinds of craft, each with a different weapons load.



▲ The pace of ground missions can be slow, but with so much movement on the battlefield, they're never boring.

STAR WARS: STARFIGHTER

LucasArts finally uses The Force

If all the *Episode I* games released so far have been like some kind of disease, *Starfighter* is the cure. Set, apparently, on some other corner of Naboo during the Trade Federation blockade depicted in *Episode I*, *Starfighter* tells the story of three mercenaries, Rhys, Vana, and Nym. Predictably, they squabble for a bit during pre-rendered cut scenes before settling down to do the hero thing and kicking a lot of robot booty.

Honestly though, the storyline is the weakest element — you can safely ignore it and not miss a thing. The real point of the game is to fly around and blow stuff up (in the right order, quickly) while the *Star Wars* music plays in the background, and it accomplishes this at a nearly brilliant level.

What grabs you immediately is that the game is gorgeous. The Naboo planetscape is lush and green, the starfields sparkle, every bit of equipment is painstakingly modeled and unshakably faithful to the source material. This is a feast for the senses, make no mistake. Likewise, the control is responsive and relatively intuitive, so you're rarely lost or confused despite the fact that dozens and dozens of different craft are whizzing around the battlefield at once.

Taking a page from *X-Wing* and *TIE Fighter* — the last, great *Star Wars* flight games — *Starfighter* presents you with a series of 14 missions, each with a main goal, and a number of optional ones. Beating

each mission is as much of a puzzle as it is a test of flight skills, since you often have to figure out the best order in which to tackle the goals — concentrate your efforts on the wrong area of the battlefield, and those swarms of fighters will overwhelm the convoy you're trying to protect.

Actually, that's the only major problem here: There are only 14 missions. Additional bonus levels can be unlocked, but only by completing the sometimes high-impossible optional goals — in other words, if you want to play more, you've got to play the original 14 over and over until you nail them perfectly.

Starfighter just might be the game to put the LucasArts *Star Wars* jinx to rest, once and for all.

► Jeff Lundrigan

HOW IT STACKS UP

1	► Ace Combat 3 (PS)	9 out of 10
2	► Colony Wars: Red Sun (PS)	9 out of 10
3	► Star Wars: Starfighter (PS2)	8 out of 10
4	► Star Trek: Invasion (PS)	8 out of 10
5	► Blast Radius (PS)	7 out of 10

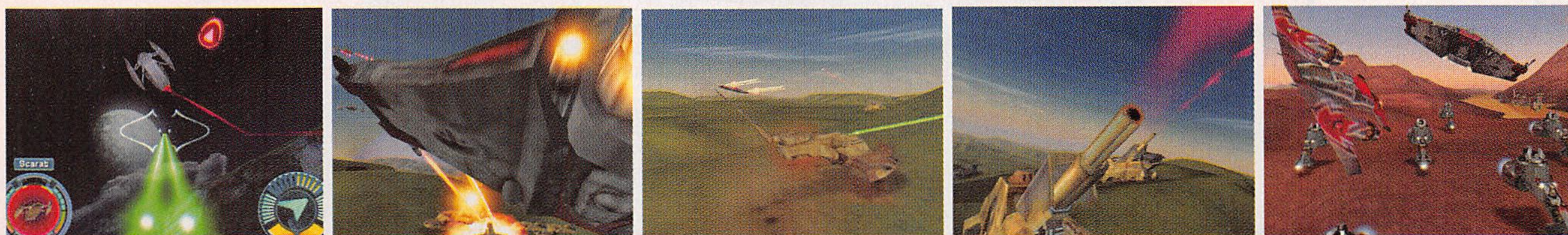
"The real point of the game is to fly around and blow stuff up while Star Wars music plays in the background"

PSM
FINAL SCORE

8/10

VERY GOOD

This is a gorgeous and thoroughly enjoyable game, hampered only by not lasting long enough or sinking into repetition.



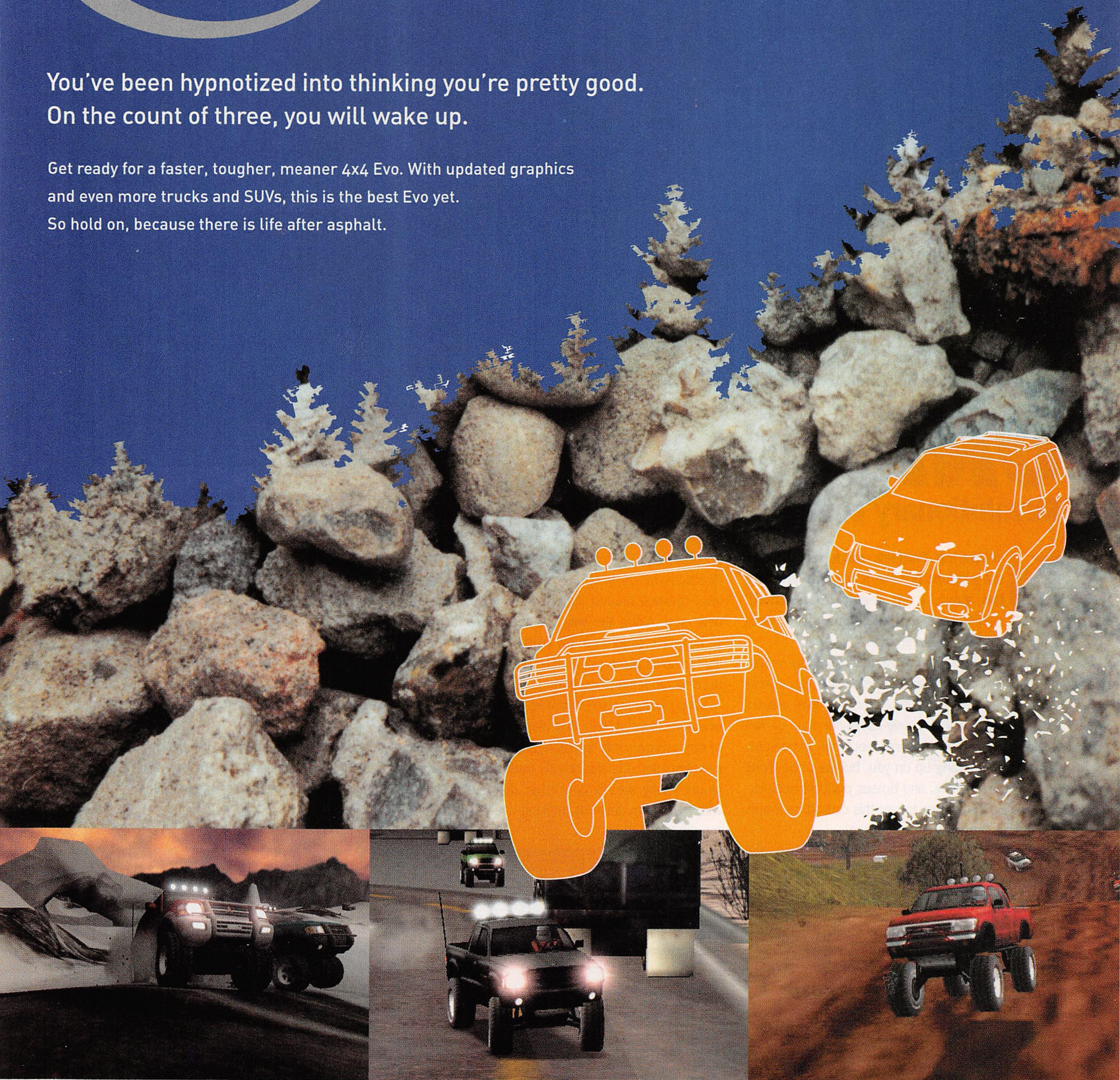
▲ You get a nice mix of mission goals, from escort duty to search and destroy, although you don't quite get enough of them. That's this title's only real flaw — it's too short!



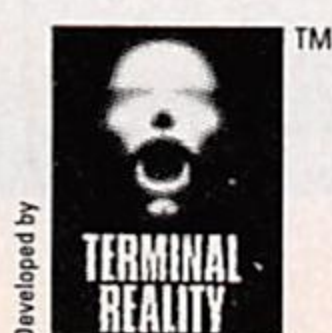
PlayStation®2

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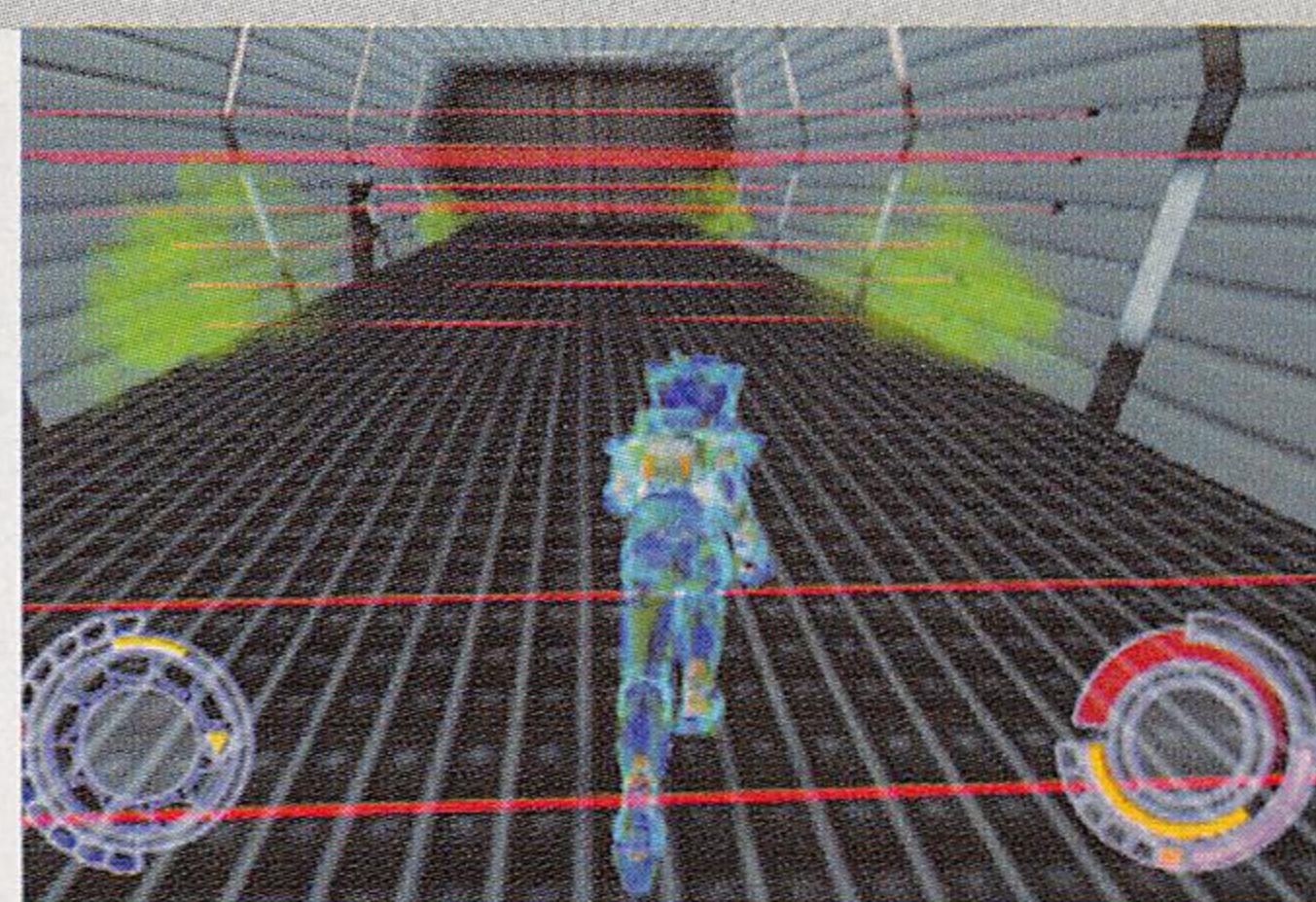


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PS2	TYPE ACTION	PUBLISHER ROCKSTAR	DEVELOPER BUNGIE	# OF PLAYERS 1	# OF DISCS 1 DVD	ESRB RATING TEEN
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▲ Cheap enemy fire is quite common, so you'll need to get used to it. get ready for a lot of incoming.



▲ Although there isn't a lot of gameplay variety, dodging lasers is one thing that breaks up the monotony.



▲ A large part of the game, unfortunately, is flipping switches like these. Flip 'em all off... or on...

ONI

Revolutionary controls, but flawed gameplay

Considering Bungie's track record, and the amount of time it put into creating this game, I am deeply disappointed.

Oni isn't necessarily a horrible game, but it does suffer from a few severe problems.

Foremost, the enemy AI is completely unfair; another company, yet again, mistakes cheap enemy AI for challenge. *Oni* initially seems to lead players through a forgiving learning curve for four or five levels, and then it suddenly becomes unbearably unfair. Enemies gang up on you, bullets come flying from out of nowhere, and bosses perform unblockable combos. Needless to say, this caused me hours of extreme frustration.

The lack of interesting mission objectives and

obstacles also hurts *Oni*. While you nominally receive directions to carry out certain tasks, almost every level revolves around flipping switches to access a new area. Along the way you may have to dodge some lasers or jump a few platforms, but these do little to spice things up. As a result, gameplay quickly becomes repetitive and boring.

This feeling is only intensified by the simplistic and uninspired level design, and bland appearance. Most of the environments resemble huge open boxes with segments and enemies quickly thrown in. In addition, almost every area is colored in dark, solid shades with hardly any textures, making every field of play too similar.

Despite these extreme faults, *Oni* does have a couple redeeming aspects. First, I must admit that *Oni* sports some of the best 3D control that I've ever played. Bungie's use of the dual analog sticks feels completely fluid and natural, although it took me a few levels to get used. I do believe that Bungie has set a standard that every other company should follow.

Finally, the huge number of special moves you must learn (18 in all) at least keep the fighting interesting. And, since the enemies are so difficult, you'll really have to learn how to properly use each move to be successful.

Although the controls are dead on, and the fighting system is tight, *Oni*'s flaws make it a mixed bag. If you really must play it, rent it first.

► Tokoya

HOW IT STACKS UP

1	► Onimusha (PS2)	8 out of 10
2	► Tomb Raider Chronicles (PS)	7 out of 10
3	► Winback (PS2)	7 out of 10
4	► Oni (PS2)	5 out of 10
5	► The Bouncer (PS2)	4 out of 10

"The enemy AI is completely unfair; another company, yet again, mistakes cheap enemy AI for challenge"

PSM
FINAL SCORE **5/10**

SO-SO

Oni isn't a terrible game, but its problems with the difficulty and level design detract from the overall experience. This is a game you'll either love or hate. You'll want to rent this one before buying it.



▲ As you can see, many of the levels look very similar, thanks to poor graphics and level design. Trust me, though; the control scheme is great and the fighting system is spot on!



THE
REVOLUTION
IS COMING

BETTER
THAN
DEAD

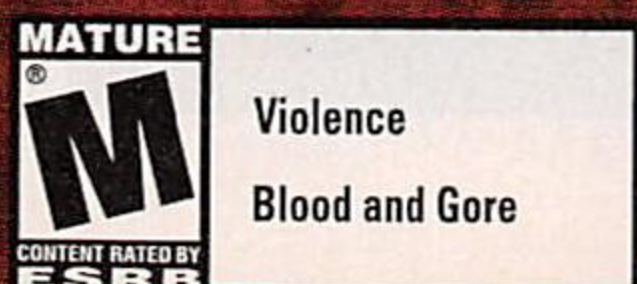
MINERS
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SCOREBOARD

Don't buy a game until you check here first!

CURRENT RELEASES

Iss #	Month	Game Name	Score	Genre	Publisher	Summary
43	Mar-01	Adv. of Cookie & Cream (PS)	7	Action	Agetec	This is one of the most creative games we've played in a long time. It's not a great one-player experience, but for two or four players, it's a complete blast.
43	Mar-01	Aqua Aqua (PS2)	7	Puzzle	3DO	A fascinating core concept and fast-paced, 3D polygonal puzzle gameplay ensure fun and replayability. However, the advanced strategy may put off non-puzzle gamers.
43	Mar-01	ATV Offroad Fury (PS)	8	Racing	Sony CEA	With its simple, intuitive controls, multiple environments, and diverse play modes, <i>ATV</i> is one hot game.
43	Mar-01	The Bouncer (PS2)	4	Fighting	Square EA	This title was the first big disappointment of the year for us. It's a great-looking game with interesting character designs, but without decent gameplay, we just can't recommend this.
43	Mar-01	Donald Duck: Quackers (PS)	6	Platform	UbiSoft	Anyone who's played through the <i>Crash Bandicoot</i> games knows just what to expect, but the classic gameplay, easy learning curve and cartoony graphics are great for the younger set.
43	Mar-01	F1 2000 (PS)	7	Racing	EA Sports	A solid, good-playing take on the popular F1 motor sport just comes up a little short of true greatness in a few key areas, the most noticeable of which are the cartoony graphics.
43	Mar-01	Kengo: Master of Bushido (PS)	8	Fighting	Crave	While <i>Kengo</i> has a few faults, they don't detract from the game at all. This is one very deep game.
43	Mar-01	Knockout Kings 2001 (PS2)	7	Boxing	EA	This is an interesting game that plays more like a fighting game than a boxing sim. The training mode emphasizes learning button combos like <i>Tekken Tag Tournament</i> . It is fun, though.
43	Mar-01	NBA Live 2001 (PS)	7	Sports	EA Sports	While this is a good, but not great, effort from EA (there are a few major AI problems on both offense and defense), it's easily the best hoops game on the PlayStation 2.
43	Mar-01	NCAA Final Four 2001	5	Sports	Sony CEA	Despite its share of problems, <i>Final Four</i> is still the only place for college basketball fans on PS2, even though the game isn't a very realistic simulation of the sport of basketball.
43	Mar-01	Theme Park Coaster (PS2)	8	Sim	EA	<i>Roller Coaster</i> is a breath of fresh air. Its open-ended gameplay may turn off more action-oriented gamers.
43	Mar-01	WDL (PS2)	4	Action	3DO	While the premise for this game (armored vehicle combat as a sport) certainly sounded like a winner, poor execution (in the form of graphics and control) relegate <i>WDL</i> to the junk yard.
43	Mar-01	Onimusha: Warlords (PS2)	8	Action	Capcom	While lacking in innovation, <i>Onimusha</i> delivers a strong storyline, plenty of action and fantastic visuals.

HIGH SCORES

These are the games that you've GOT to get your hands on!

Iss.	Month	Game Name	Score	Genre	Publisher
39	Nov-00	SSX (PS2)	10	Snowboard/Race	Electronic Arts
41	Jan-01	Breath of Fire IV (PS)	9	RPG	Capcom
40	Dec-00	DOA2: Hardcore (PS2)	9	Fighting	Tecmo
40	Dec-00	Final Fantasy IX (PS)	9	RPG	Square
42	Feb-01	Rayman Revolution (PS2)	9	Platformer	Ubi Soft
40	Dec-00	Spyro: Year of the Dragon (PS)	9	Platform	Sony
41	Jan-01	Colin McRae Rally 2.0 (PS)	8	Racing	Codemasters
41	Jan-01	Moto Racer World Tour (PS)	8	Racing	Infogrames
40	Dec-00	FIFA 2001 (PS)	8	Sports/Soccer	EA Sports
40	Dec-00	FIFA 2001 (PS2)	8	Sports/Soccer	EA Sports
40	Dec-00	Midnight Club (PS2)	8	Racing	Rockstar
40	Dec-00	Mike Tyson Boxing (PS)	8	Sports/Boxing	Codemasters
40	Dec-00	MOH: Underground (PS)	8	1st Person Shooter	Electronic Arts
40	Dec-00	Unreal Tournament (PS2)	8	First Person Shooter	Infogrames
40	Dec-00	Summoner (PS2)	8	RPG	THQ
40	Dec-00	WWF Smackdown! 2 (PS)	8	Wrestling	THQ
39	Nov-00	Armored Core 2 (PS2)	8	Action	Agetec
39	Nov-00	Kessen (PS2)	8	Strategy	Electronic Arts
39	Nov-00	Madden NFL 2001 (PS2)	9	Sports	Electronic Arts
39	Nov-00	NASCAR 2001 (PS)	8	Racing	Electronic Arts
39	Nov-00	Tekken Tag Tournament (PS2)	8	Fighting	Namco
39	Nov-00	Tony Hawk 2 (PS)	8	Skateboarding	Activision
42	Feb-01	Super Bust-A-Move (PS2)	8	Puzzle	Acclaim
42	Feb-01	King of Fighters '99 (PS)	8	Fighting	Agetec
42	Feb-01	Lunar 2: Eternal Blue (PS)	8	RPG	Working Design

REVIEW BACKLOG

NOTE: The reviews in issue 38 and earlier used a five-star scale

Iss.	Month	Game name	Score	Genre	Publisher	Iss.	Month	Game name	Score	Genre	Publisher
42	Feb-01	Acclaim Sports' HBO Boxing (PS)	5	Boxing	Acclaim	39	Nov-00	Madden NFL 2001 (PS2)	9	Sports	Electronic Arts
42	Feb-01	Blade (PS)	4	Action	Activision	39	Nov-00	Mega Man Legends 2 (PS)	7	Action/Adventure	Capcom
42	Feb-01	Championship Surfer (PS)	8	Surfing	Mattel	39	Nov-00	NASCAR 2001 (PS)	8	Racing	Electronic Arts
42	Feb-01	Driving Emotion Type-S (PS2)	4	Racing	Square EA	39	Nov-00	Polaris Snocross (PS)	6	Racing	Vatical
42	Feb-01	Ducati World (PS)	5	Racing	Acclaim	39	Nov-00	Ridge Racer V (PS2)	7	Racing	Namco
42	Feb-01	King of Fighters '99 (PS)	8	Fighting	Agetec	39	Nov-00	Smuggler's Run (PS2)	6	Racing/Action	Rockstar
42	Feb-01	Lunar 2: Eternal Blue (PS)	8	RPG	Working	39	Nov-00	Sno-Cross Championship Racing (PS)	6	Snowmobile Racing	Crave
42	Feb-01	NCAA GameBreaker 2001 (PS2)	3	Football	989 Sports	39	Nov-00	SSX (PS2)	10	Snowboard/Race	Electronic Arts
42	Feb-01	Persona 2: Eternal Punishment (PS)	7	RPG	Atlus	39	Nov-00	Street Fighter EX3 (PS2)	6	Fighting	Capcom
42	Feb-01	Power Spike Pro Beach Volleyball	5	Sports	Infogrames	39	Nov-00	Swing Away Golf (PS2)	7	Golf	Electronic Arts
42	Feb-01	Rayman Revolution (PS2)	9	Platformer	Ubi Soft	39	Nov-00	Sydney 2000 (PS)	4	Sports	Eidos Interactive
42	Feb-01	RC Revenge Pro (PS2)	5	Racing	Acclaim	39	Nov-00	Tekken Tag Tournament (PS2)	8	Fighting	Namco
42	Feb-01	Real Pool (PS2)	7	Billiards	Infogrames	39	Nov-00	Tony Hawk 2 (PS)	8	Skateboarding	Activision
42	Feb-01	Star Wars: Demolition (PS2)	5	Car Combat	LucasArts	39	Nov-00	X Squad (PS2)	4	Action	EA Games
42	Feb-01	Super Bust-A-Move (PS2)	8	Puzzle	Acclaim	38	Oct-00	Bust-A-Groove 2	3.5	Dancing	Enix
41	Jan-01	Army Men: Air Attack 2 (PS)	5	Action	3DO	38	Oct-00	Digimon World	2	Monster Breeding	Bandai
41	Jan-01	Army Men: Sarge's Heroes 2 (PS)	5	Action	3DO	38	Oct-00	Iron Soldier 3	1	Action	Eclipse Software
41	Jan-01	Breath of Fire IV (PS)	9	RPG	Capcom	38	Oct-00	Madden NFL 2001	4	Football	Electronic Arts
41	Jan-01	Colin McRae Rally 2.0 (PS)	8	Racing	Codemasters	38	Oct-00	Parasite Eve 2	3.5	RPG/Action	Square
41	Jan-01	Cool Boarders 2001 (PS)	4	Snowboarding	Sony CEA	38	Oct-00	Pro Pinball Big Race USA	3	Pinball	Empire Interactive
41	Jan-01	Driver 2 (PS)	6	Racing/Action	Infogrames	38	Oct-00	Spider-Man	3.5	Action	Activision
41	Jan-01	ESPN X Games Snowboarding (PS2)	7	Snowboarding	Konami	38	Oct-00	Star Trek: Invasion	4	Space Shooter	Activision
41	Jan-01	Gundam Battle Assault (PS)	4	Fighting	Bandai	38	Oct-00	Tenchu 2	4	Action/Adventure	Activision
41	Jan-01	Harvest Moon: Back to Nature (PS)	7	Simulation	Natsume	38	Oct-00	Vampire Hunter D	1	Action/Adventure	Jaleco
41	Jan-01	Moto Racer World Tour (PS)	8	Racing	Infogrames	37	Sep-00	Ball Breakers	2	Action	Take Two
41	Jan-01	MTV Pure Ride (PS)	6	Snowboarding	THQ	37	Sep-00	Mortal Kombat Special Forces	2	Action/Adventure	Midway
41	Jan-01	NASCAR 2001 (PS2)	4	Racing	EA Sports	37	Sep-00	Ms. Pac-Man Maze Madness	3	Action/Puzzle	Namco
41	Jan-01	NBA Live 2001 (PS)	7	Sports	EA Sports	37	Sep-00	NCAA GameBreaker 2001	3	Football	989 Sports
41	Jan-01	NBA Shootout 2001 (PS)	4	Sports	Sony CEA	37	Sep-00	NCAA Football 2001	3.5	Football	Electronic Arts
41	Jan-01	Ready 2 Rumble 2 (PS2)	6	Boxing	Midway	37	Sep-00	NFL GameDay 2001	3.5	Football	989 Sports
41	Jan-01	Silent Scope (PS2)	7	Shooter	Konami	37	Sep-00	Rampage Through Time	1	Action	Midway
41	Jan-01	Silpheed (PS2)	6	Shooter	Working Designs	37	Sep-00	Valkyrie Profile	4	RPG	Enix
41	Jan-01	Sky Odyssey (PS2)	7	Flying	Activision	37	Sep-00	X-Men Mutant Academy	2.5	Fighting	Activision
41	Jan-01	Surfing H3O (PS2)	6	Surfing	Rockstar	36	Aug-00	Armorines: Project S.W.A.R.M.	1.5	First Person Shooter	Acclaim
41	Jan-01	Tomb Raider: Chronicles (PS)	7	Action/Adventure	Eidos Interactive	36	Aug-00	Chrono Cross	4.5	RPG	Square EA
41	Jan-01	Top Gear Dare Devil (PS2)	6	Racing	Kemco	36	Aug-00	Grudge Warriors	2	Action	Take Two
41	Jan-01	Torneko: The Last Hope (PS)	1	Action/RPG	Enix	36	Aug-00	Koudelka	4	Action/Strategy	Infogrames
41	Jan-01	Ultimate Fighting Championship (PS)	2	Fighting	Crave	36	Aug-00	Legend of Dragoon	4.5	RPG	Sony CEA
40	Dec-00	Crash Bash (PS)	6	Party Game	Sony CEA	36	Aug-00	Legend of Mana	3	RPG	Square EA
40	Dec-00	DOA2: Hardcore (PS2)	9	Fighting	Tecmo	36	Aug-00	Rayman 2	4	Action/Platform	Ubisoft
40	Dec-00	Fantavision (PS2)	6	Puzzle	Sony CEA	36	Aug-00	Rhapsody	4	RPG	Atlus
40	Dec-00	ESPN Int'l Track and Field (PS2)	7	Sports	Konami	36	Aug-00	RPG Maker	4	RPG	Agetec
40	Dec-00	FIFA 2001 (PS)	8	Sports/Soccer	EA Sports	36	Aug-00	Surf Riders	2	Surfing	Acclaim
40	Dec-00	FIFA 2001 (PS2)	8	Sports/Soccer	EA Sports	36	Aug-00	Threads of Fate	3.5	RPG/Action	Square EA
40	Dec-00	Final Fantasy IX (PS)	9	RPG	Square	36	Aug-00	Vanguard Bandits	3	Strategy/RPG	Working Designs
40	Dec-00	Gameday 2001 (PS2)	2	Sports/Football	Sony CEA	36	Aug-00	Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?	1.5	Trivia	Sony CEA
40	Dec-00	Gradius III & IV (PS2)	5	Shooter	Konami	35	Jul-00	Countdown Vampires	1	Adventure	Bandai
40	Dec-00	Gungriffon Blaze (PS2)	7	Action	Working Designs	35	Jul-00	Covert Ops: Nuclear Dawn	3.5	Action/Adventure	Activision
40	Dec-00	Knockout Kings 2001 (PS)	5	Sports/Boxing	Electronic Arts	35	Jul-00	Gekido	3.5	Fighting	Interplay
40	Dec-00	Midnight Club (PS2)	8	Racing	Rockstar	35	Jul-00	Grind Session	3.5	Skateboarding	Sony CEA
40	Dec-00	Mike Tyson Boxing (PS)	8	Sports/Boxing	Codemasters	35	Jul-00	Kurt Warner Arena Football	1.5	Football	Midway
40	Dec-00	MOH: Underground (PS)	8	1st Person Shooter	Electronic Arts	35	Jul-00	Nightmare Creatures II	2.5	Action/Fighting	Konami
40	Dec-00	Moto GP (PS2)	6	Racing	Namco	35	Jul-00	Reel Fishing II	1.5	Fishing	Natsume
40	Dec-00	NHL 2001 (PS)	7	Sports/Ice Hockey	Electronic Arts	35	Jul-00	Spec Ops: Stealth Patrol	4	Combat Sim	Take Two
40	Dec-00	NHL 2001 (PS2)	6	Sports/Ice Hockey	Electronic Arts	35	Jul-00	Strider 1 & 2	3	Action	Capcom
40	Dec-00	Orphen: Scion of Sorcery (PS2)	5	Action/Adventure	Activision	35	Jul-00	Test Drive Le Mans	2.5	Racing	Infogrames
40	Dec-00	Ray Crisis (PS)	5	Shooter	Taito	35	Jul-00	Wild Arms 2: Second Ignition	3	Adventure	Interplay
40	Dec-00	Spyro: Year of the Dragon (PS)	9	Platform	Sony	34	Jun-00	Eagle One: Harrier Attack	3.5	Air Combat	Infogrames
40	Dec-00	Summoner (PS2)	8	RPG	THQ	34	Jun-00	Family Game Pack	2.5	Family Fun	3DO
40	Dec-00	The World is Not Enough (PS)	6	First Person Shooter	Electronic Arts	34	Jun-00	MediEvil II	3	Action/Adventure	Sony CEA
40	Dec-00	Timesplitters (PS2)	7	First Person Shooter	Eidos Interactive	34	Jun-00	Micro Maniacs	4	Racing	Codemaster
40	Dec-00	Unreal Tournament (PS2)	8	First Person Shooter	Infogrames	34	Jun-00	MLB 2002	4	Sports/Baseball	Sony
40	Dec-00	WCW Backstage Assault (PS)	6	Wrestling	Electronic Arts	34	Jun-00	Mr. Driller	3.5	Puzzle/Action	Namco
40	Dec-00	Wild Wild Racing (PS2)	5	Racing	Interplay	34	Jun-00	Need for Speed: Porsche Unleashed	3	Racing	Electronic Arts
40	Dec-00	WWF Smackdown! 2 (PS)	8	Wrestling	THQ	34	Jun-00	Sammy Sosa's High Heat Baseball '01	2	Sports/Baseball	3DO
39	Nov-00	Alien Resurrection (PS)	7	First Person Shooter	Fox Interactive	34	Jun-00	Speed Punks	3.5	Racing	Sony CEA
39	Nov-00	Armored Core 2 (PS2)	8	Action	Agetec	34	Jun-00	Star Wars: Jedi Power Battles	2	Adventure	LucasArts
39	Nov-00	Bomberman Party Edition (PS)	6	Action	Hudson	34	Jun-00	Vagrant Story	4	Action/RPG	Square EA
39	Nov-00	Destruction Derby Raw (PS)	5	Action/Racing	Midway	34	Jun-00	Vanark	2	Shooter	Jaleco
39	Nov-00	Dino Crisis 2 (PS)	6	Action	Capcom	33	May-00	Armored Core	3.5	Action/Shooter	Agetec
39	Nov-00	Dragon Valor (PS)	7	Action	Namco	33	May-00	Army Men: Sarge's Heroes	1	Action	3DO
39	Nov-00	Dynasty Warriors 2 (PS2)	6	Strategy/Action	Koei	33	May-00	Crusaders of Might and Magic	1	Action/Adventure	3DO
39	Nov-00	Eternal Ring (PS2)	5	Action/RPG	Agetec	33	May-00	Front Mission 3	3.5	Strategy	Square EA
39	Nov-00	Evergrace (PS2)	6	RPG/Action	Agetec	33	May-00	Galerians	4	Action	Agetec
39	Nov-00	Incredible Crisis (PS)	7	Action/Puzzle	Titus	33	May-00	Gauntlet Legends	3.5	Action	Midway
39	Nov-00	Kessen (PS2)	8	Strategy	Electronic Arts	33	May-00	Mobil 1 Rally Championship	4	Racing	Electronic Arts

REINVENTING THE

► Every fighting game needs interesting, marketable characters that each bring something unique to the table. We created this cast to illustrate our ideas (see pg. 49).

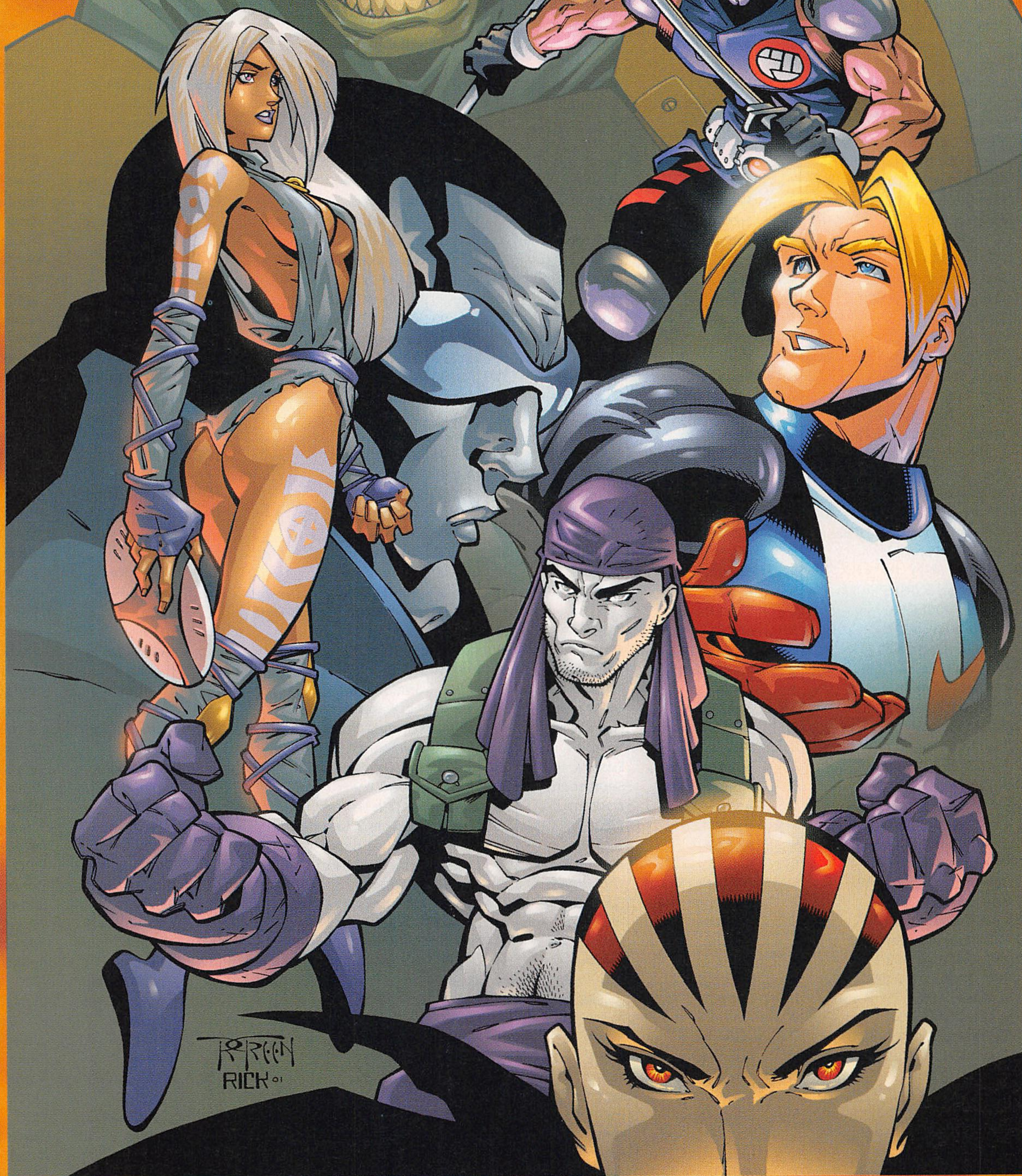


Illustration: Randy Green, Rick Ketcham, David Stuart

FIGHTING GAME

Not long ago, fighting games ruled with an iron fist. Games like *Street Fighter* and *Mortal Kombat* weren't just big hits, they were part of a social phenomenon. Fans packed arcades and spent countless hours honing their skills until every last move, combo, and Fatality were mastered. It's no exaggeration to say that the genre brought gamers together in a way that we haven't seen since.

Now, new fighting games are few and far between, with only a couple notable releases each year. Once the most mass-market genre in all of videogames, it's become the domain of the hardcore minority. But that could all be about to change.

With radically new versions of *Tekken*, *Street Fighter*, *Soul Calibur*, *Dead or Alive* and even *Mortal Kombat* in the works, fighting games may finally be getting a long overdue shot in the arm. As the industry's top designers secretly reinvent the genre, we present our thoughts on what went wrong, plus our ideas for putting fighting games back on top.

by CHRIS SLATE

WHAT HAPPENED?

There are a number of things that contributed to the decline. Mainly, fighting games got stale. At their core, they've evolved very little since *Street Fighter II* kicked the genre off nearly a decade ago. Instead of focusing on creating fresh new types of one-on-one fighting experiences, developers have settled for simply adding "more" — more moves, more characters, more impressive graphics. That stuff is all well and good, but without any true, radical innovation, any creative medium is going to get stale over time.

There have been a few attempts at

creating something different, such as Capcom's *Power Stone* and Square's *Bushido Blade* and *Tobal* titles. Unfortunately, those games' failure to do big business scared everyone else back into churning out their yearly revamps of last year's fighters.

Another major reason that mainstream gamers have turned their backs on the genre is that, well, the genre turned its back on *them*. Too many of today's fighting games demand that the player already have detailed knowledge of how previous versions played. A five-second ass-kicking by a ten-year *Street Fighter* veteran at the arcade is a rough

way to get introduced to the genre, and probably won't bring a newbie back for more. Starting players are simply put off by the overwhelming amount of stuff they have to learn.

LOOKING BACK AT STREET FIGHTER II

SFII is the game that started the fighting game boom of the 90s, so let's look back at the things it did to attract mainstream gamers. For one thing, *SFII* had a short, but deep list of clearly defined characters, each with a very unique look, identity and style of play. This is a stark contrast to many of today's fighters, where it really doesn't matter who you're fighting because you fight everyone the same way. But in *SFII*, you really had to take each character's unique style into consideration. For example, you wouldn't fight a grappler like Zangief up close, but that's exactly how you'd take on Dhalsim.

SFII also took real skill to play well. Many fighting games focus too much on memorizing long lists of moves and combos; in *SFII*, it wasn't the total amount of moves that mattered, but how well the player used them. For example, Ryu only had three special attacks, but there were many ways for a clever player to use each one. That's what made head-to-head play so great, that each player could put their own creative spin on how to play a character.

Speaking of characters, that's another of *SFII*'s strong points. Those core guys — Ryu, Chun Li, Guile and the rest — are still the genre's most recognizable icons. Each had a unique personality, look, and color scheme, so that every character brought something totally different to the table. Too many other games have characters whose styles overlap, and they fight too similarly. As a result, it waters each character down, making them generic and forgettable.

It's important that game designers take a long look at everything *SFII* did so well. This is the game that turned casual gamers into hardcore fighting fanatics, so Capcom must have been onto something, right?

We need to get back to simpler gameplay. We need games that don't overwhelm a beginner with hundreds of moves and combos per character, but still allow for advanced players to show their skill through creative strategies. Sometimes less can be more.

THE PLAYER NEEDS TO BE TAUGHT

I pop *Dead or Alive 2* into my PS2 and start it up. I've read the instructions, so I know what the buttons do. Four or five fights in, I'm fighting a guy that I simply *can not* beat. Over and over, he thrashes me and I have to continue. On about my tenth try, I finally get past him to the next stage. What really sucks ►

DARE TO BE DIFFERENT

While there have been countless "me-too" copycat fighters, it takes real innovation to make a big hit. Unfortunately, trying something new doesn't always guarantee success.

Street Fighter II

While this technically wasn't the very first fighting game, it was the one that everyone noticed. It introduced a ton of new concepts, and laid the blueprint that every other fighter would follow.



Bushido Blade

This fighter from Square featured giant areas, full 3D movement, unique swordplay and one-hit kills. Unfortunately, its feudal Japan setting just didn't help it catch on over here in the US.



Tobal No. 1

This was the first *Street Fighter II*-style game to move fully into 3D, with full 360-



degree movement. It also introduced a complex grappling system.

Power Stone

Still the fighter with the highest level of environment interaction, but it didn't have a decent fighting system players could sink their teeth into.



Virtua Fighter

The original 3D fighting game. Not only was *Virtua Fighter* the first to swap polygons for 2D sprites, but it also introduced the "Ring

Out" concept and plenty of other new features. Plus, the action was changed to be more realistic, with no *SFII*-style fireballs.



Mortal Kombat

It's basically just a bloody *SFII* clone, but *Mortal Kombat* was the first game to pour on all of the hidden secret stuff, which is now a staple of almost all fighting games. It also started a blood frenzy with its ultra-violent action.



► is that when I finally won, I didn't do anything any differently — I just kept fighting until I got lucky.

The problem here is that the game didn't let me know how I was supposed to play it. Does the fighting focus more on defense or all-out offense? How often should I try reversals? I know the pieces of the puzzle, but I have no clue how to put them together into a good fighting strategy. Of course, after playing for a few days I start to see the full picture, but why should a new player have to get past such a big hurdle to start enjoying the game? And how many players will keep at it until they learn?

"Fighting games need to do a much better job of educating the player"

Fighting games need to do a much better job of educating the player, teaching them about the flow of the action and how it should be played. Some games include training modes, but they mostly focus on practicing moves and combos. What nobody ever tells the player is basic strategy; that is, how to approach a fight. This needs to change if the genre is to entice new gamers to play. The player needs to be given more direction, so they can realize and enjoy their progress.

Along those lines, it would be very helpful for the characters in the game to be identified as either Beginner, Intermediate or Advanced. The player could choose to learn the basics with a beginner character, then move on once they learn how to get the most out of

the advanced ones. No fighting game is perfectly balanced, and has its weak and strong characters. It's important for the player to know which is which, especially when he picks up the game for the very first time.

THE ONE-PLAYER MODE MUST DELIVER

Fighting games were originally designed to be fun at the arcade. You could put a couple tokens in, play a few rounds and move on. It was primarily a two-player experience. Now that the arcade business has dried up, fighting games need to make

changes to that mold. The days of buying the latest PlayStation version of *Tekken* and running right through it to the

end in just ten minutes needs to end.

That's not to say that the two-player mode should be left behind — couldn't we have the best of both worlds? *Street Fighter Alpha 3* for the PlayStation and *Soul Calibur* for the Dreamcast both made good attempts at making the single-player experience fun, by adding varied challenges and longer story modes. Developers need to think of fun, creative ways to keep us playing even when our friends aren't around. Dedicated gamers will play just to improve their skills, but added goals make it more fun.

TWO-PLAYER ACTION

Head-to-head competition is what made fighting games so

popular back in the arcades, but most people don't go to arcades anymore.

Online gaming will eventually fix this problem, as the internet will become one giant, global arcade. You'll be able to sit at home in your PJs and test your skills against a *Tekken* master on the other side of the world. However, head-to-head online play won't really take off until internet connection speeds are fast enough to keep up with the split-second timing that fighting games require. It's something to look forward to, but for now a lot of emphasis must be placed on the single-player experience.

CAN WE PLEASE HAVE A GOOD STORY?

Ever tried to figure out what the hell the endings mean in *Tekken* or *Dead or Alive 2*? Don't, you'll just hurt your brain. Fighting games rely so much on the strength of their characters that it only makes sense to make those characters as cool and interesting as possible. There's no reason why a fighting game can't have an exciting storyline. This is actually the one area where *Street Fighter II* falls flat. Its characters are great, but their story is confusing, at best (especially when you get into *Alpha* territory).

Along those lines, players need a compelling challenge; a badass villain that you simply can't wait to pound on at the end of the game. I hate to pick on *Tekken* again because it's a great series, but who the hell is "Unknown" at the end of *Tekken Tag*? Why should we care about beating her? Where's the thrill? What should have been a classic confrontation just fell flat. ►

QUESTION EVERYTHING

In reinventing the genre, traditional fighting game elements need to be rethought. It makes sense to use established methods if they work well with a developer's new ideas, but things shouldn't be done a certain way just because "they always have". Here is just a small list of simple, new ideas:

Tournament Structure

Who says that every fighting game has to be set up like a two-out-of-three falls tournament? Or for that matter, even include a life bar?

Stances

Used well, different stances could add a lot of depth to the fighting strategy. For example, if the player is getting smacked around, he could retreat into a defensive stance to decrease the amount of damage he takes while he plans his next move.

Stamina

Here's one idea: replace the standard "Super" meter with a "Stamina" meter. It would be fully-charged from the start, but would deplete with each action (when not attacking, the meter would refill). There's a lot of potential strategy in how and when you'd spend that stamina energy.

The "Sweet Spot"

Landing an attack from a move's optimum range would do extra damage, and could be acknowledged by a "Perfect Hit" message appearing somewhere on the screen. Some characters could specialize in either up-close or distance attacks.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT CHARACTERS

You could have the world's most advanced fighting game, with breathtaking graphics and tons of unique features, but it won't mean much without cool, marketable characters.

The character is how the player sees himself inside the game. Would you rather be a young kung-fu badass wearing hip clothes, or a balding 17-century samurai? A masked fighter with a mysterious past, or a generic barbarian with no back story? A good character has to work on several levels, such as:

Personality

A good character will constantly show his personality through taunts, dialogue, and his fighting style. The player needs to be able to pick a character he can identify with, to help pull him into the game.

Uniqueness

The worst type of character is a generic one that doesn't stand out in any way. Characters need to jump out at the player and demand his attention, with interesting qualities that intrigue the player and make him want to learn more about them.

Balance

If the characters are too similar to each other they won't stand out as much, and the whole cast will seem watered down. Each one should play and look dramatically different from everyone else. In *Street Fighter II*, each character has their own unique color scheme: green + orange = Blanka; brown + yellow = Dhalsim; white + red = Ryu, and so on. This seemingly small design theme really helps everyone to stand out.



Illustration: Randy Green, Rick Ketcham, David Stuart



PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

We created the above image to illustrate all of the concepts that we've been talking about (big thanks to artist extraordinaire Randy Green!). This mock game is our proposal on how to relaunch the fighting genre for the modern age of videogames. We put in as many new ideas as we could, and focused on mainstream appeal.

To attract the broadest audience possible, we went with a fully-interactive 3D environment. We love 2D fighters like *Street Fighter* and don't want to see them go away, but what we're looking for here is a true revolution. If done right, a fully interactive environment can add a wealth of cool new

possibilities that simply wouldn't be possible in 2D. Our game would have a semi-modern look with a slightly anime feel, like *Street Fighter*. Fighters that are set in space, medieval times, etc. usually have a tougher time appealing to most fans. Also, the camera would have to constantly move to give the best view of the action. The trick is to show enough of the characters' surroundings while still giving a good close view of the fight.

To the right we've listed the specific gameplay features that's shown in this screen, to give you a good idea of the type of action we envision for this game. Be sure to write in with your ideas, as well!

CAN 3D FIGHTING GAMES BE AS GOOD AS 2D ONES?

Yes. But it's going to take a different approach. It will always be tough for motion-captured polygonal characters to control as crisp as 2D sprites, but who says 3D fighting games have play just like 2D ones? A full 3D environment opens up tons of new possibilities. Imagine a fight that's just as wild and crazy as a martial arts movie scene, where you're rolling over tables, kicking off walls and knocking guys into boxes

— that would be GREAT in a videogame! Capcom's *Powerstone* did some cool things in this area, but sadly, it wasn't really designed to be a fighting game.

I'm not saying that we should quit on 2D fighters by any means. They're still a blast to play. But realistically, there's not much new there to explore. If fighting games are going to capture the imaginations of the masses once again, it has to be done in true 3D. The genre has to be rebuilt from scratch around the elements that players expect in a modern game.

DREAM GAME FEATURES

1. We didn't go too crazy with this idea, so we left life bars in, but added "Stamina" meters.
2. Little environment details, such as this knife in a bowl, could come into play.
3. Like in *DOA2*, rooms could be smashed through to enter new areas.
4. This pole, broken off when the wall was ripped through, could be used as a weapon.
5. You could do a leap attack off this boulder, or smash your opponent's face into it.
6. The landscape isn't flat, with hills that throw subtle twists into the fighting strategy.
7. Facial expressions would constantly change.
8. The sword sticks into the tree, scaring away a bird. Details like this bring the world alive.
9. Slam your opponent into this tree, or do a move off of it, like a kickflip.
10. Fighting in water adds variety, and could slow the fighters' movements a little.
11. These pipe bombs could be a special attack for this character, that could be used up.
12. Wind blowing through the leaves and grass would really help to immerse the player.

It's what you fear.

ALONE IN THE DARK™

THE NEW NIGHTMARE

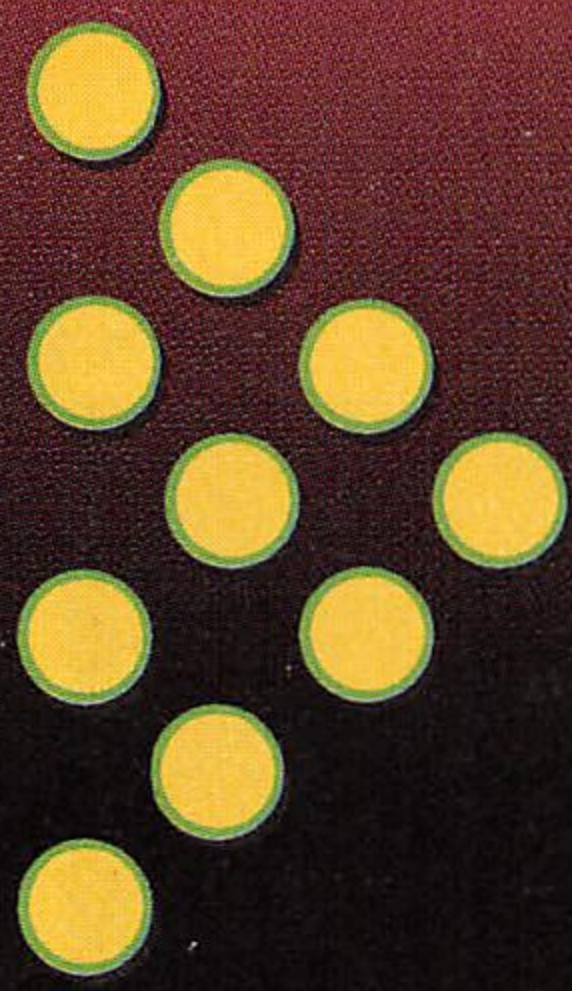
Terror arrives June 2001. aloneinthedark.com



DARKWORKS
GAME DEVELOPMENT STUDIO



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PREVIEWS

Your first look at the hottest new games

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BLOOD OMEN 2
PlayStation's original
vampire is back! pg. 52

HOT GAMES

Don't waste a second;
turn on over to these
big games NOW!



56 ► Soul Reaver 2



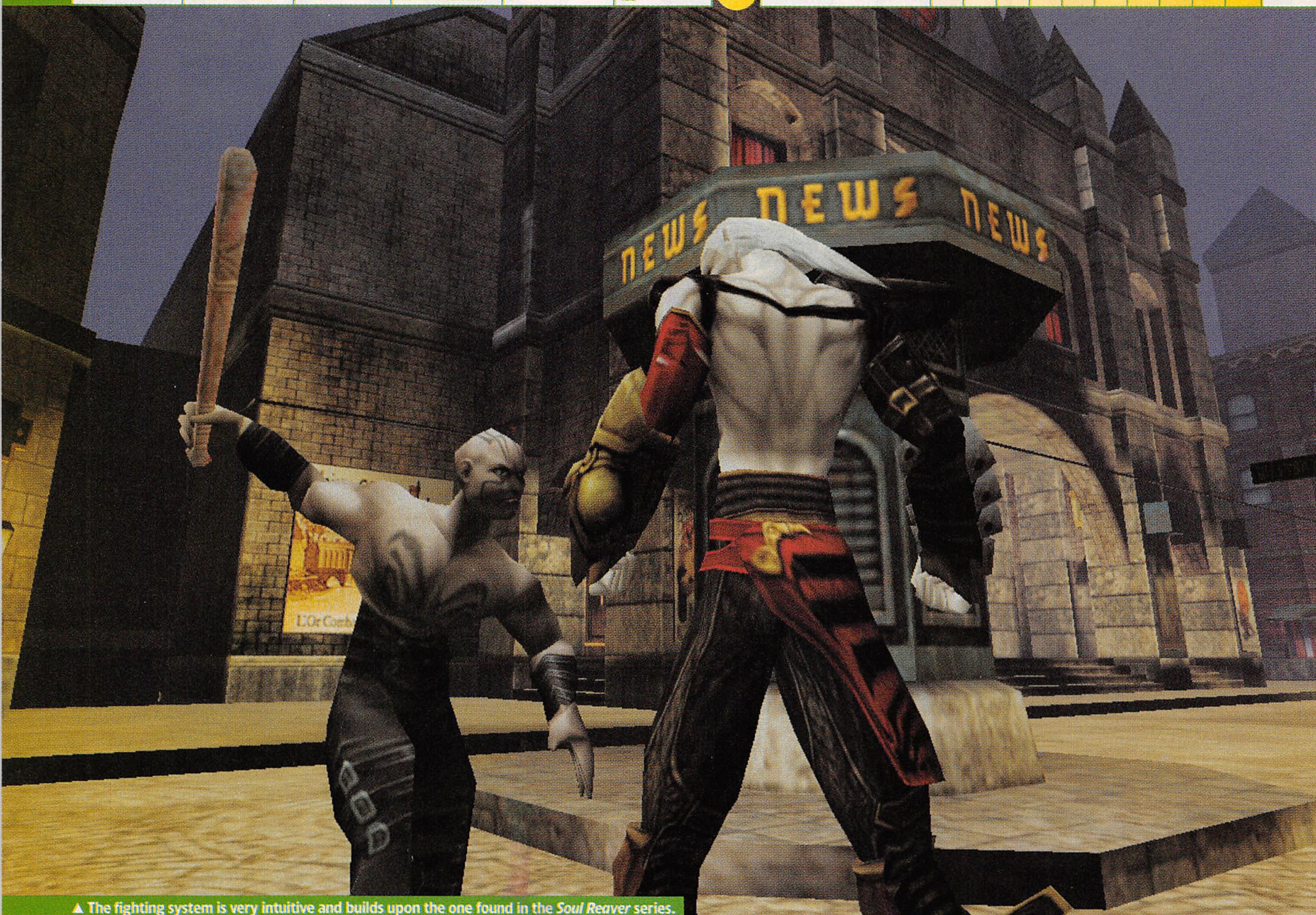
74 ► Giants



82 ► Twisted Metal Black

PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	RELEASE DATE	TYPE	# OF PLAYERS	ESRB RATING
Eidos	Crystal Dynamics	Fall	Action/Adventure	1	TSO

30%



▲ The fighting system is very intuitive and builds upon the one found in the *Soul* / *Reaver* series.

BLOOD OMEN 2

Being the bad guy can often be a lot more fun

Sadly, not that many current PlayStation owners have had the pleasure of playing the first *Blood Omen*. Despite its amazingly long load times, the title had

great atmosphere and plenty of clever puzzles. The voiceovers weren't that bad either, amazingly enough. Now, the game that started the Kain legacy is finally getting its long-awaited sequel.

In order to make playing a bad guy as fun as possible, the developers decided to create a situation where players would feel sympathetic towards Kain. He's been thrown to the masses (sans the Soul Reaver and most of his power) and now must make his way through a world of vampire haters and killers. He'll have to use all of his abilities and combat proficiency just to stay alive. Needless to say, things aren't going to be easy for our dark anti-hero.

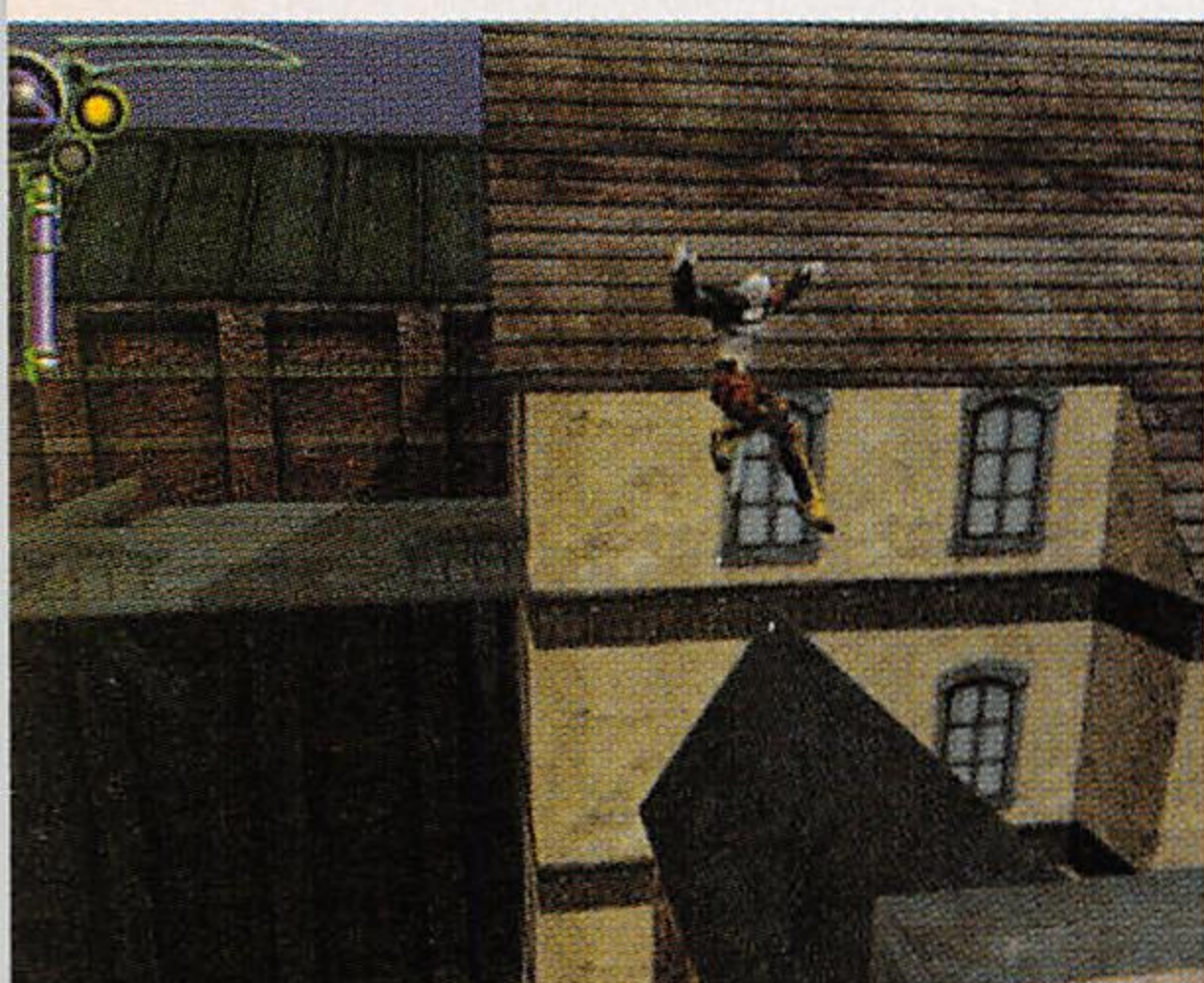
What makes *Blood Omen 2* such an interesting title, and probably why it

will appeal to both adventure and RPG fans, is its attention to detail. Everything has been created to feel as real as possible. Environments have

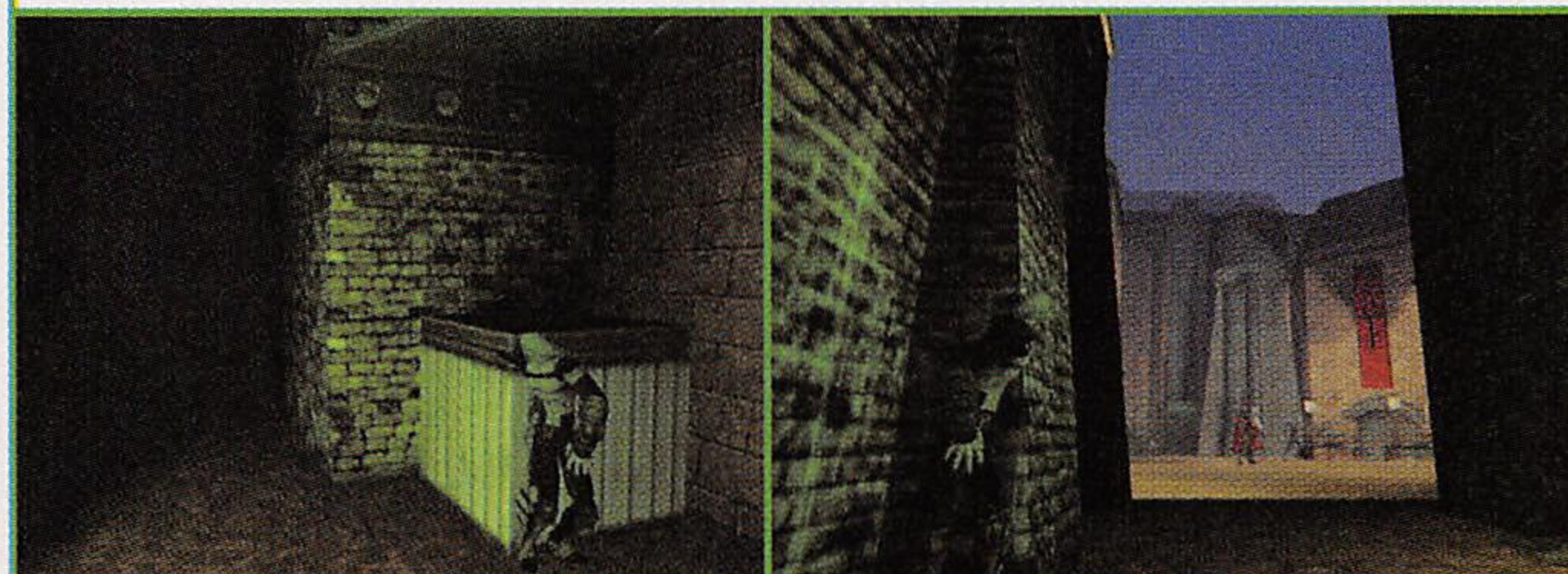
been meticulously designed and populated with people going about their daily business. Soldiers draw their swords should Kain approach with his

HIDING IN THE SHADOWS

One of Kain's cooler powers is the ability to fade into the shadows, so that no one can see him. Stealth plays a major role, like in *Metal Gear*.



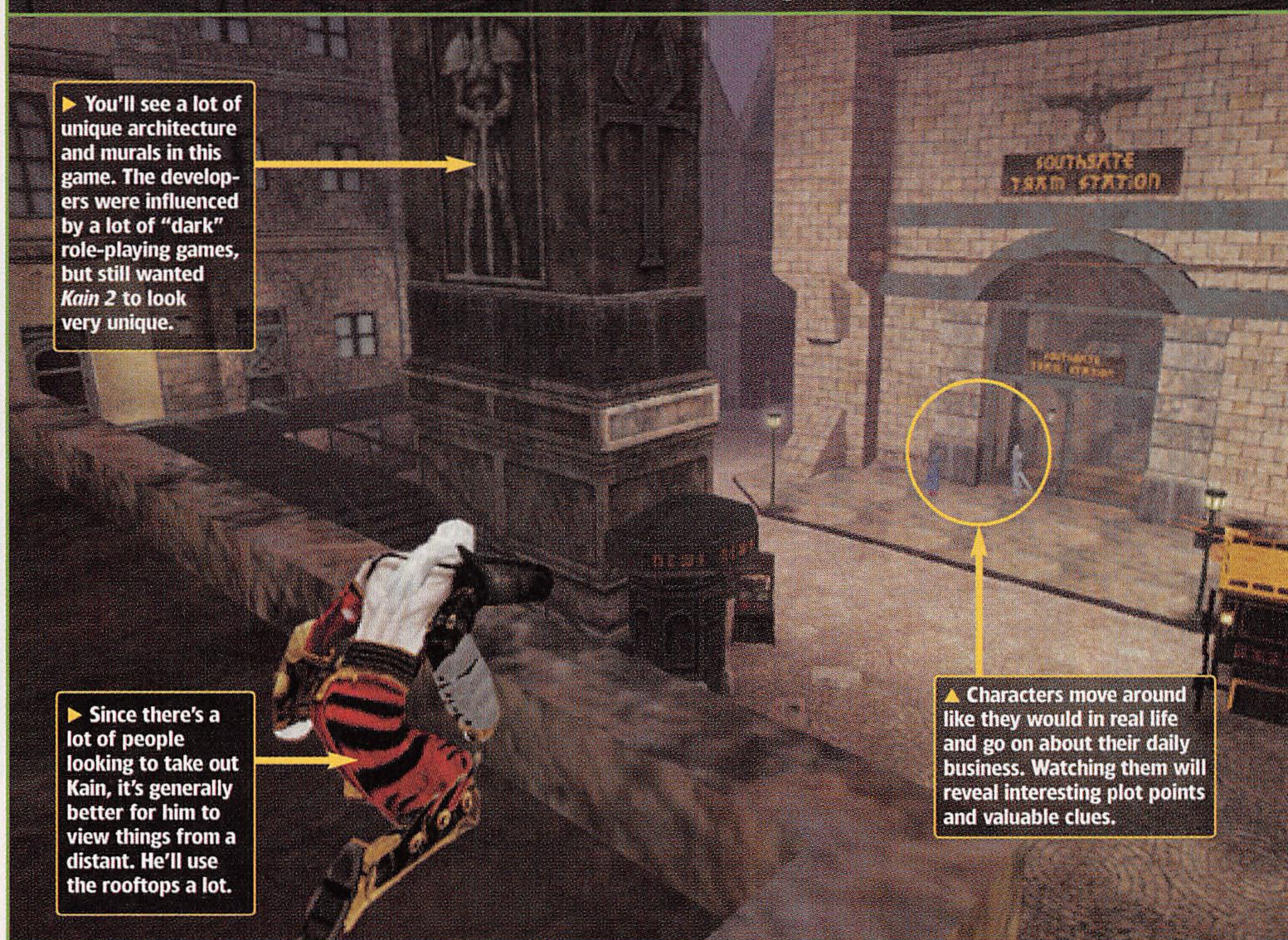
▲ One of the first Dark Gifts that Kain earns is the super-leaping ability. He can jump rooftop to rooftop.



▲ **Stealth**, ala *Metal Gear Solid*, plays a very important role in some of the city areas..

PSM BREAKDOWN

An up-close look at the game in action



► You'll see a lot of unique architecture and murals in this game. The developers were influenced by a lot of "dark" role-playing games, but still wanted *Kain 2* to look very unique.

► Since there's a lot of people looking to take out Kain, it's generally better for him to view things from a distant. He'll use the rooftops a lot.

▲ Characters move around like they would in real life and go on about their daily business. Watching them will reveal interesting plot points and valuable clues.

"What makes Blood Omen 2 such an interesting title, and probably why it will appeal to both adventure and RPG fans, is its attention to detail"

weapon drawn, but only after a warning first. Passerbys even stop to watch fights, but quickly flee should Kain get the upperhand. That's just cool.

Blood Omen II's fighting system shares a lot in common with the one found in *Soul Reaver*, but it takes the combat to the next logical level. It's quite refined now and allows the gamer to have a bit more creative freedom. From the start, Kain has a set number of attacks and combinations but he can pick up any weapons he finds and expand his moves list. Each weapon has its own unique animations and finishing attacks, which should greatly add to the depth.

Like his arch-nemesis, Raziel, Kain also has several dark abilities at his disposal. However, they can only be earned by stealing them from other powerful vampires. And, as you would expect, these abilities come straight out of *Dracula 101*, with a little hint of *The Matrix* thrown in. The ones that we've seen used include fading into the

shadows, super-jumping and mind control. Of those, the mind control is easily the most interesting because it allows you to take complete control of another character and use them to solve puzzles or fight for you.

Just looking at these screenshots reveals a sequel with a whole lot of potential. The scary thing is that the developers have almost a year left in the development cycle. That should give them plenty of time to make sure the gameplay is as refined as possible and that the overall experience is both continuously innovative and riveting. Basically, just give the gamers out there something really meaty to sink their teeth into and they'll be happy. And so will we. Be ready. Kain returns this Fall.

► **Stephen Frost**

the BUZZ

Realistic environments, a creepy atmosphere and a kick-ass bad guy should all add up to some serious gaming fun.

STEALTH KILLS

Just like in *Tenchu*, Kain can perform special "stealth kills" if he manages to sneak up on an enemy. They're important to use when your health is low.



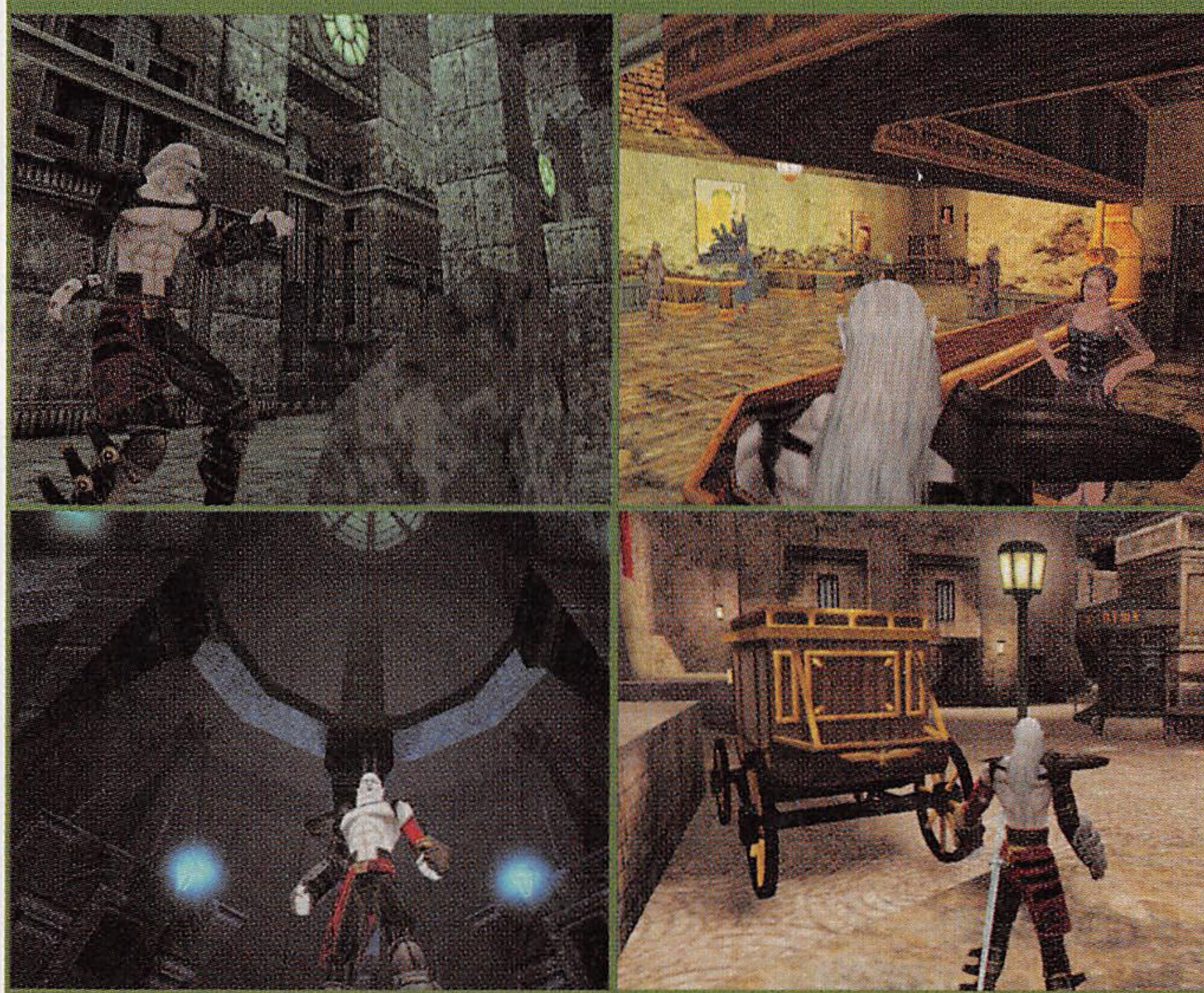
▲ This guy doesn't know it, but he's about to get a huge sword through his neck.

▼ Kain will rip out your heart and show it to you before you die.

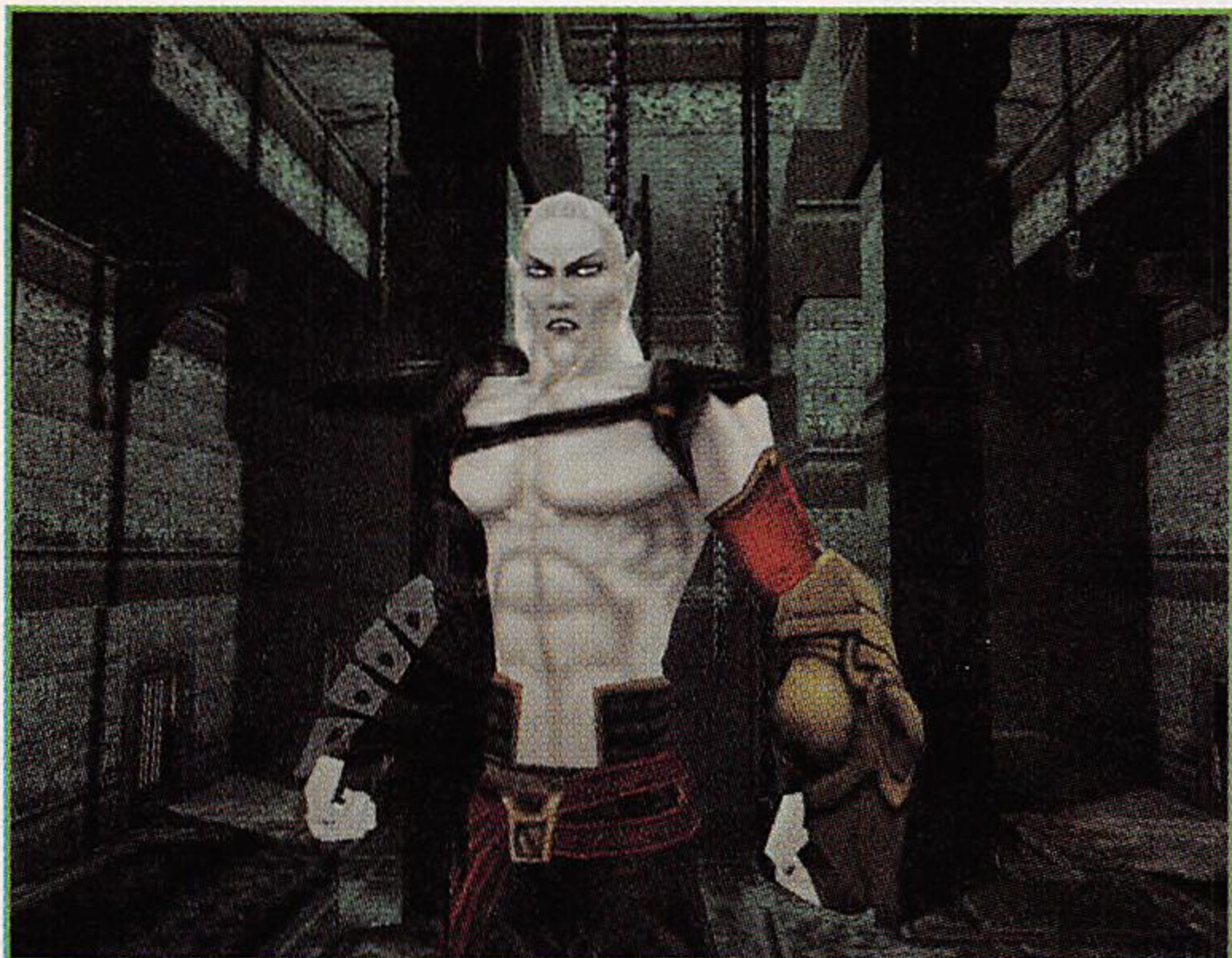


IT'S ALL DIFFERENT

A lot of time and energy was spent on making the world of Kain feel and look as real as possible. To do that, the developers made sure that there was a lot of variety in the different environments. Nothing looks the same at all, which helps to keep things fresh.



▲ Half of the fun in this game is going around and checking out all the different locations.



▲ The artists at Crystal Dynamics did a really good job of making Kain both highly detailed and a very marketable character.

▼ The local soldiers don't really care for vampires that much and will take every opportunity to team-up on Kain.



▲ One-on-one fighting is Kain's forte, especially when he's got a nice sword to use. This soldier doesn't stand a chance. Say "Good night", Gracey.



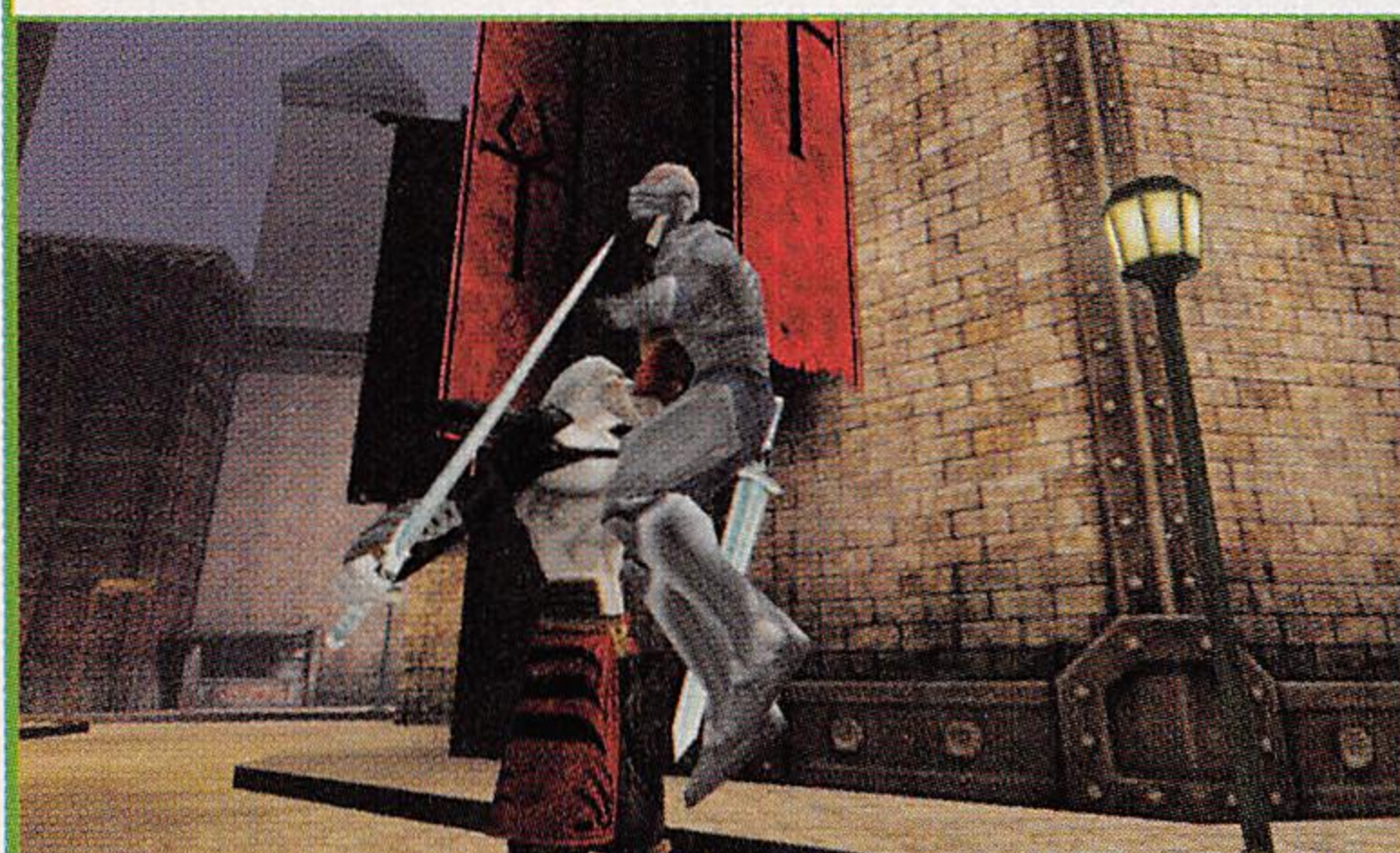
▲ While there are dozens upon dozens of weapons to be found in the game, Kain can pick-up and use them all. Some weapons are obviously better against certain opponents.



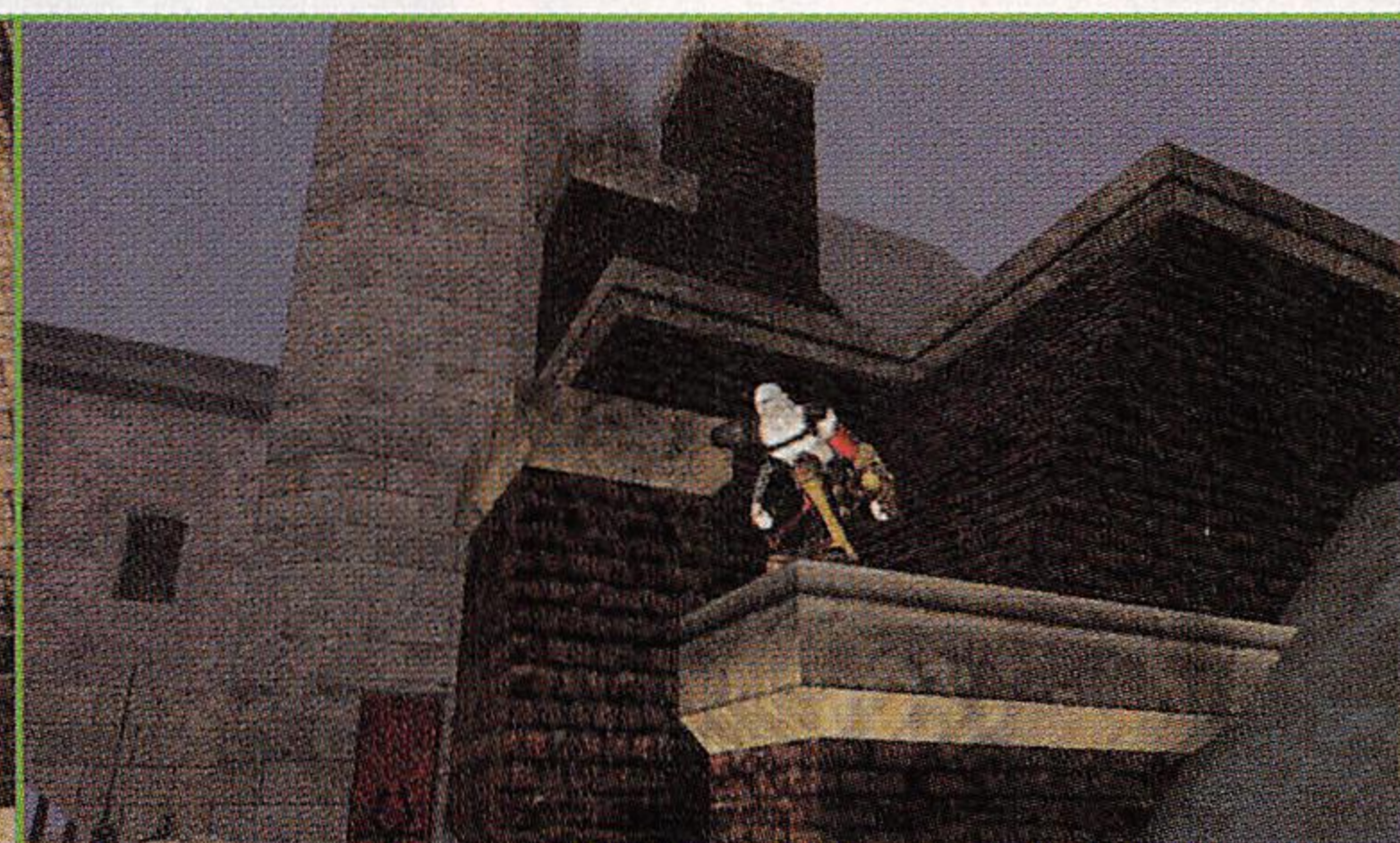
▲ "It wasn't me, man." Kain, being the vampire that he is, needs blood to survive and he doesn't really care where or who he gets it from.

BADASS VAMP

Aside from being well-designed, Kain just has that "don't mess with me" attitude. He may be evil but that won't prevent gamers from loving him.



▲ "Here, let me give you a lift." See how Kain helps people when they're down. He's such a nice and caring individual.

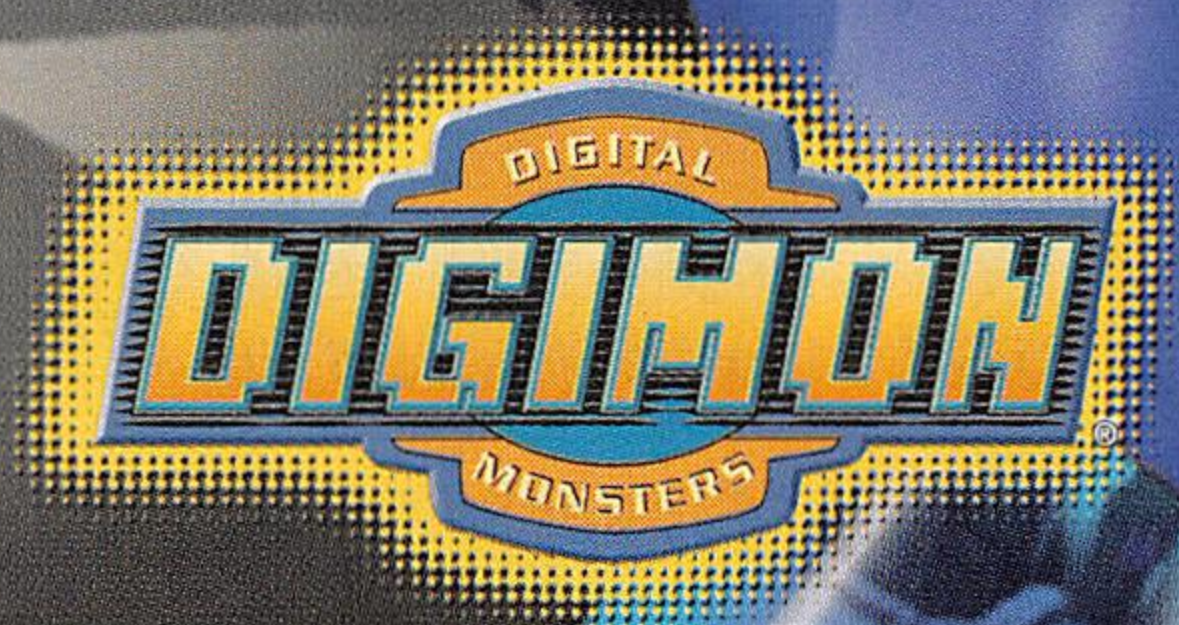


▲ In a scene straight out of *Batman*, Kain overlooks the city before moving on. He's wants revenge on those who've defeated him.



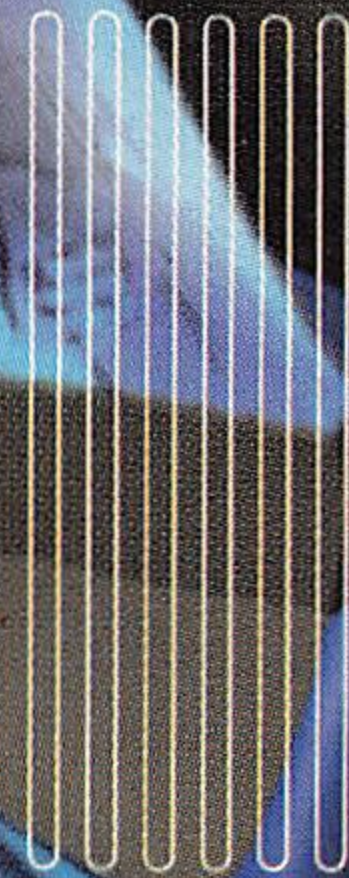
▲ Not all of the people that Kain comes across are pushovers. This guy looks like he means business and should give Kain a run for his money.

Get off
my Planet!



DIGIMON WORLD 2

200 DIGITAL MONSTERS! 120 More Digimon than Digimon World! FIGHT FOR YOUR OWN PARTY! Defeat Digimon in battle and they are added to your party!



IMPROVE YOUR GAME PLAY! Escape to a safe place if you're in danger! You can do anything when it's your turn!



PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	RELEASE DATE	TYPE	# OF PLAYERS	ESRB RATING
EIDOS	CRYSTAL DYNAMICS	summer	ACTION/ADVENTURE	1	TBO

PS2

PERCENT COMPLETE

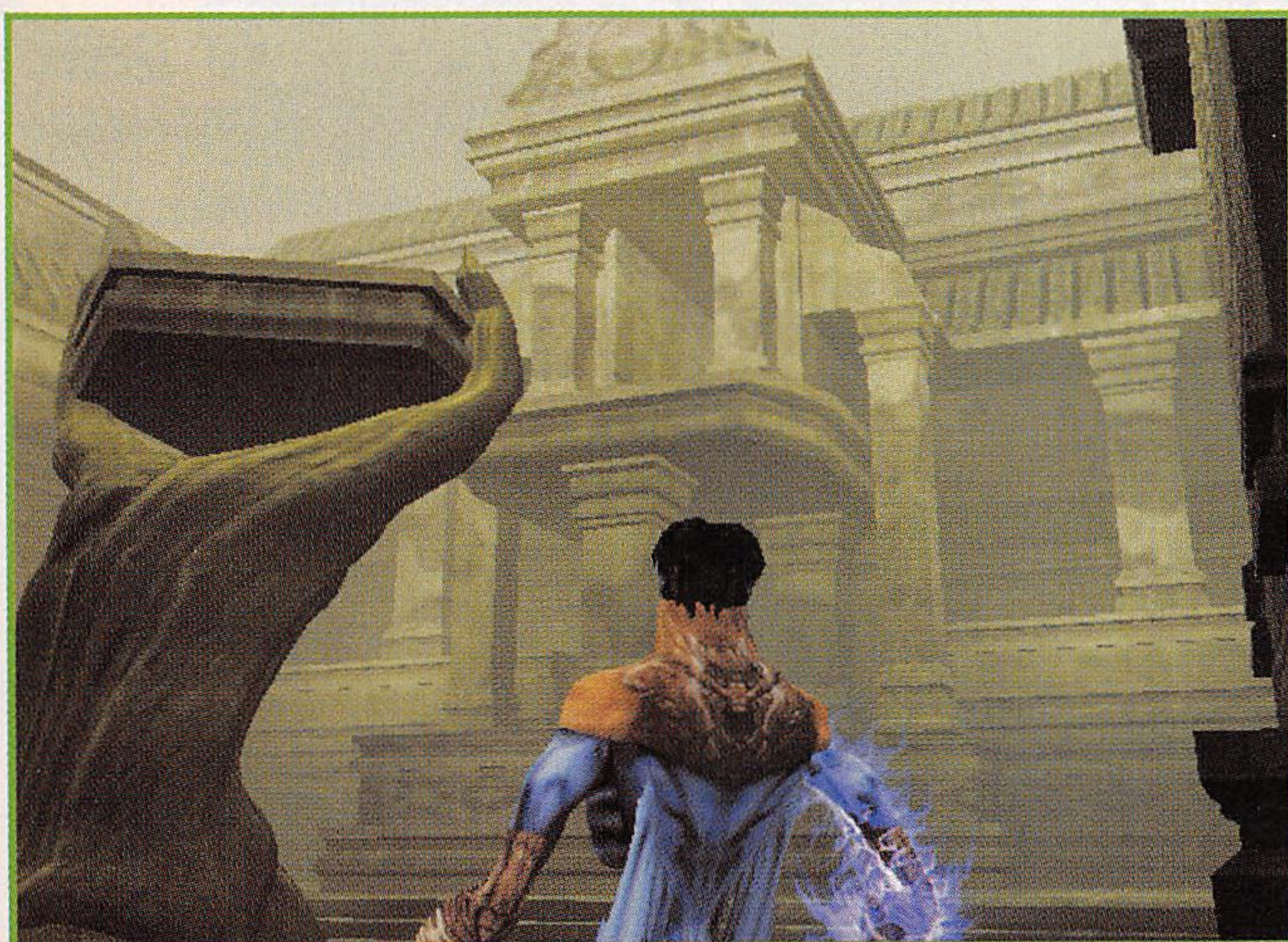
75%



▲ Some power ups are more effective than others, but it depends upon the type of enemy you're fighting. These scrawny guys should be no match for your reaver.

SOUL REAVER 2

The ominous vampire hero continues his wrath on PS2



▲ Everything at this point looks very sharp. The antialiasing doesn't appear to be a problem in SR2 at all. All of the environments have a decidedly creepy atmosphere.

Raziel, our evil vampire hero from the first *Soul Reaver*, captivated gamers with his

dark character design and interesting, yet ominous, story. Picking up from exactly where the first game left off, the tortured and rotting Raziel continues his ruthless quest to destroy his arch nemesis, Kain.

However, there's a bit of twist, making Kain harder to catch up to: Raziel must travel to the past and end Kain before he even ascends to power. In addition to this new, more fascinating premise, Crystal D promises to resolve some of the questions *Soul Reaver* raised and never answered. For example, as Raziel travels to past lands from the original *Blood Omen*, the

mystery revolving around Raziel's resurrection by Kain should be explained even more. This should also lead to revelations of Nosgoth and the disappearance of the vampire clans.

In terms of gameplay, there will be a number of enhancements. In addition to retaining many of his former attacks and weapons, Raziel receives some new ones. He will be able to perform decapitations, shoot different types of projectiles with weapon enhancements, learn new spells, and interact with the environment and use it as a weapon. Accompanying the more powerful arsenal are an equally dangerous cast of new villains. Raziel will have to deal with vampire

THE PUZZLES

Many of the puzzles ought to be more intricate; they'll definitely more interesting than merely moving objects around. Although we don't know what he's doing here, it looks like he's reflecting a sun beam onto something, perhaps a vampire.

▼ You'll need to use your noodle on these puzzles. No, Raziel isn't trying to find WWF Raw on his satellite dish...



hunters, demons from parallel dimensions, and spectral spirits.

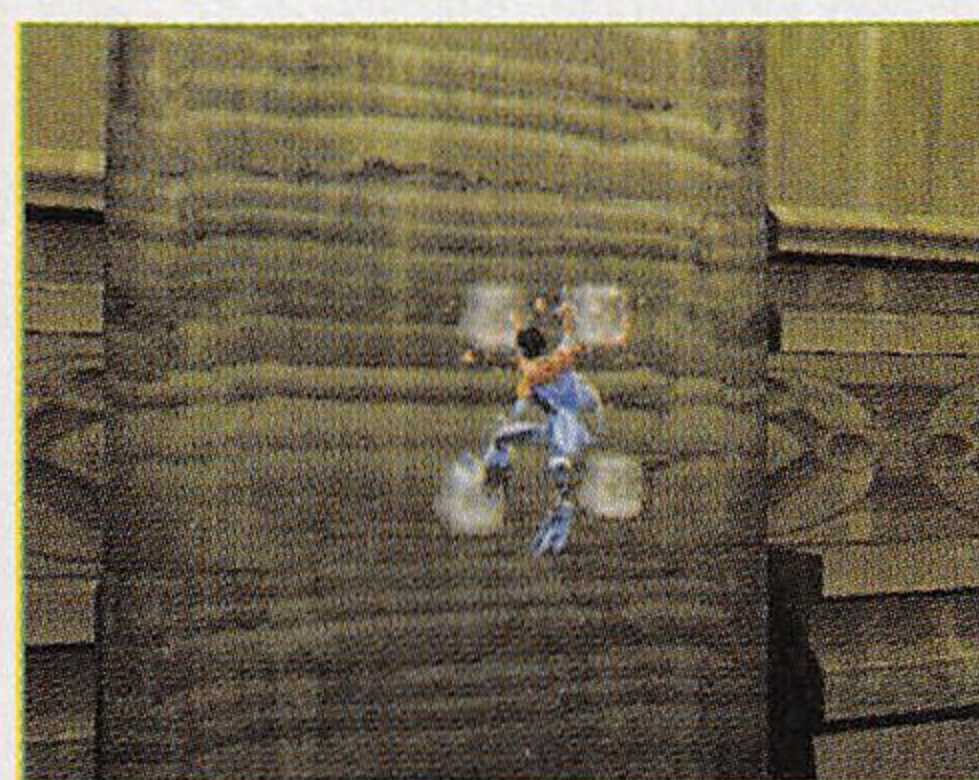
One major weak point that slightly degraded the gameplay in *Soul Reaver* was the puzzle system. Most of them simply consisted of moving boxes and the like. Although we've heard very little regarding this problem, we know that Crystal D has spent considerable time on making the puzzles more thought-provoking and involving.

Searching for clues to puzzles, impaling monsters, or just moving around in the environment will present

no problems and should actually be quite pleasant, given *SR2*'s graphic and technological quality. Raziel's model will contain 2,800 polygons (compared to the Dreamcast model of 900 poly), moving at 60 FPS. With anti-aliasing implemented as well, everything will appear crisp and smooth.

So far, *SR2* is clearly shaping up to be a more than worthy sequel to a good game. If everything continues as planned and there are no delays, we should have a full review very soon.

► Tokoya



◀ Just like a fly, climbing walls will be extremely important.

the BUZZ

Despite its modesty, Crystal D's use of PS2's graphics capabilities will truly begin to show what the machine can do.

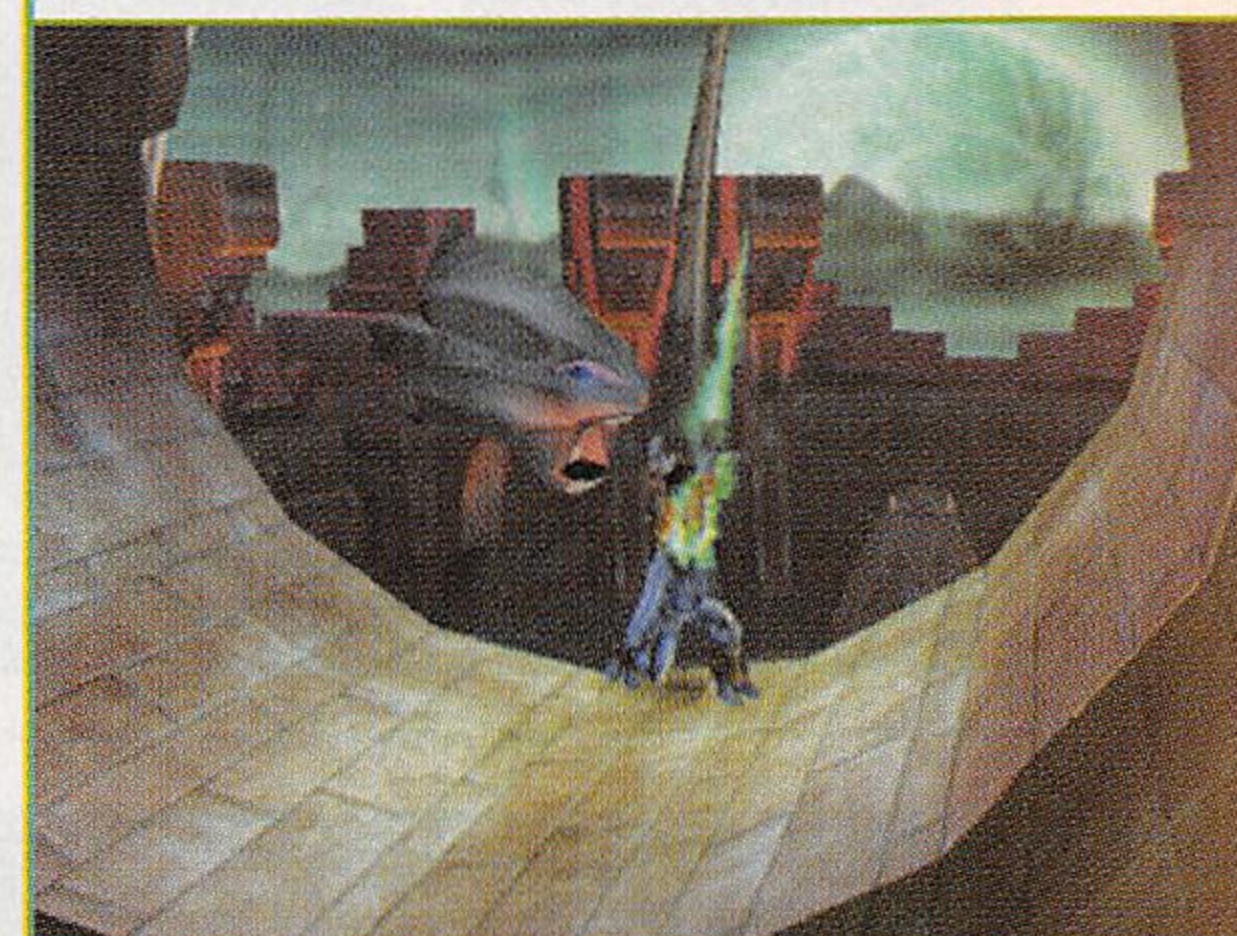


▲ Spectral spirits are tough to fight against, but nice to look at, with their special effects.

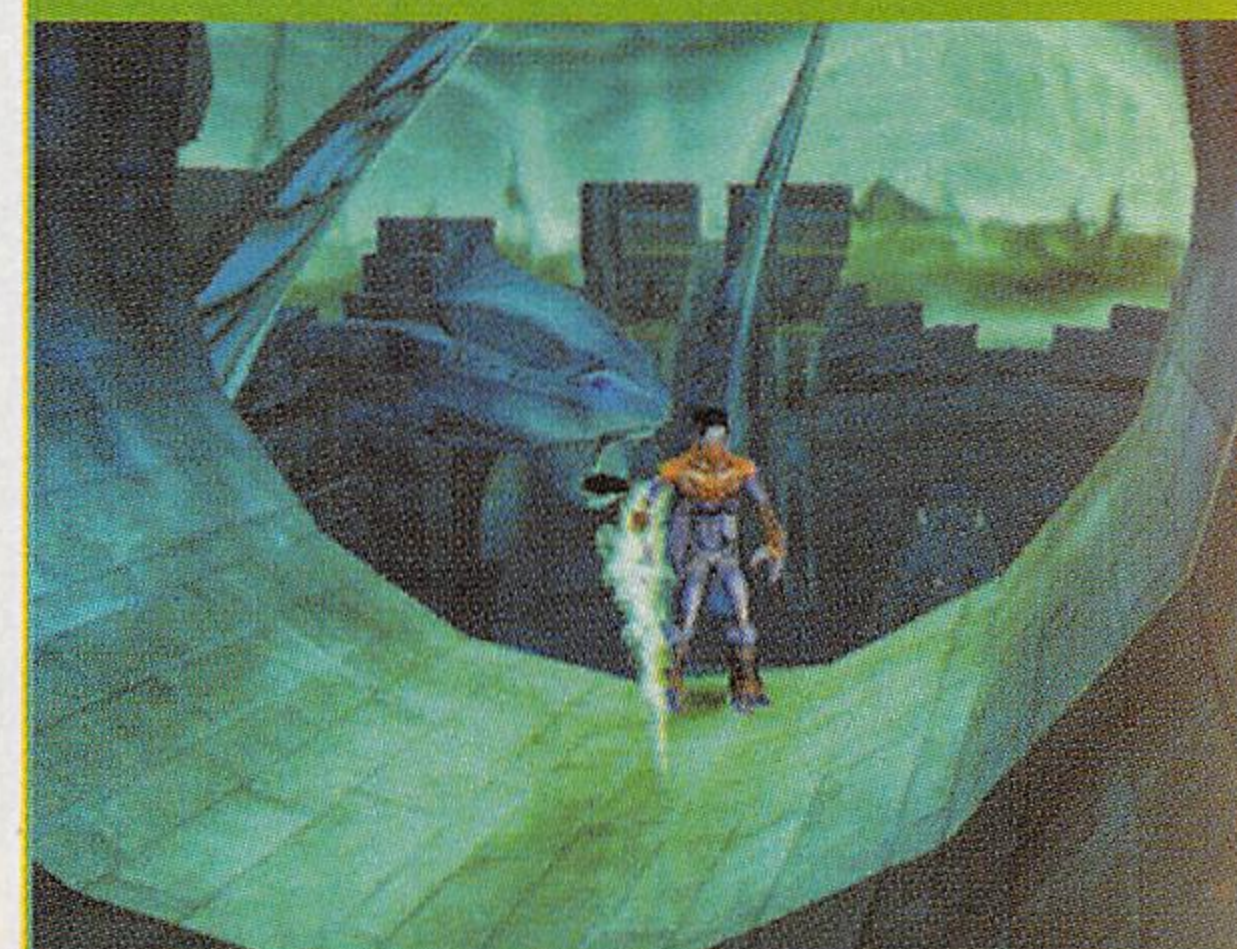
"So far, *Soul Reaver 2* is clearly shaping up to be a more than worthy sequel to a good game"

WARPING THROUGH REALMS

Going through the light and dark realms not only changes the appearance of everything, but can also reveal clues to puzzles, or cause a bridge to appear.



▲▼ The background here look quite normal, but when you go to another realm, it looks completely different. Now, its blue!



PSM BREAKDOWN

An up-close look at the game in action

► The game is loaded with puzzles, so you'll have to use your brain just as much as your *Soul Reaver* sword.

► The developers are working hard to make *Soul Reaver*'s first PS2 adventure an impressive one. The environments and lighting will be much improved over any version seen so far.

▼ Raziel's main weapon is his *Soul Reaver* sword, which he can charge up with different abilities. You'll be able to do a lot more with the sword than in the last game.



▼ Check out the model. It's definitely more detailed than the DC version.

THE SOUL REAVER

The Soul Reaver is capable of different types abilities. As you can see from the color of the Soul Reaver, the sword

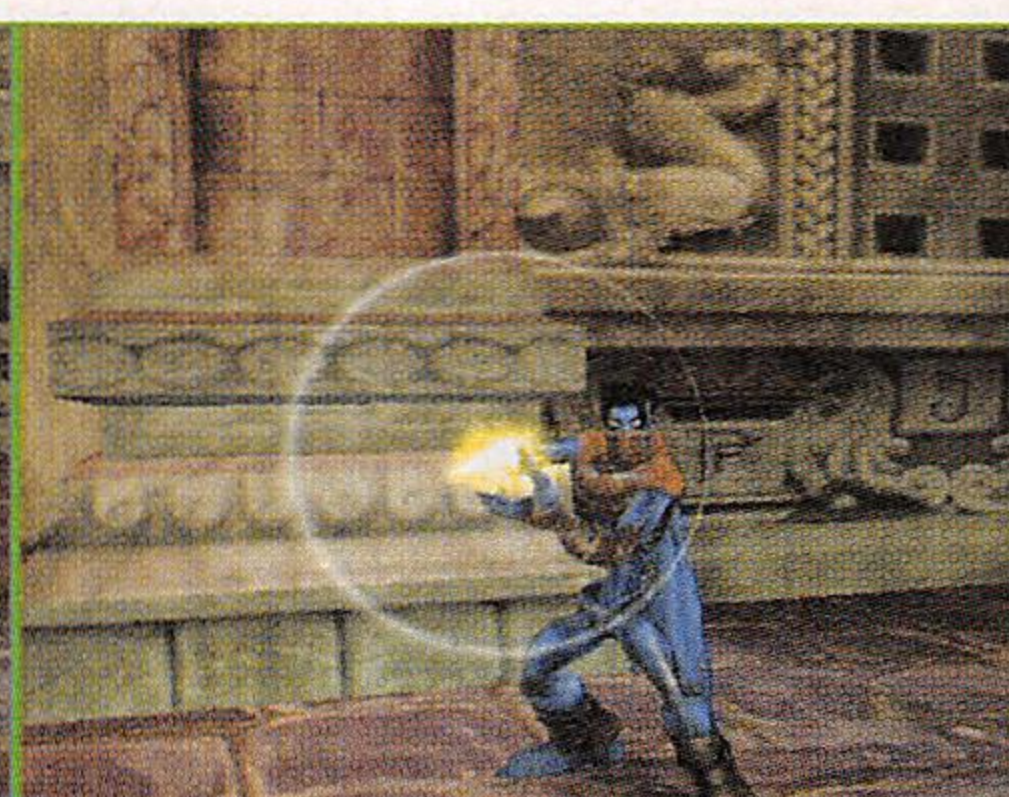
changes abilities when put into a font. Some Soul Reavers can unlock a door, or create a bridge.



▲ This Soul Reaver is blue, but we have no idea what it does. Maybe it doubles as a disposable lighter...



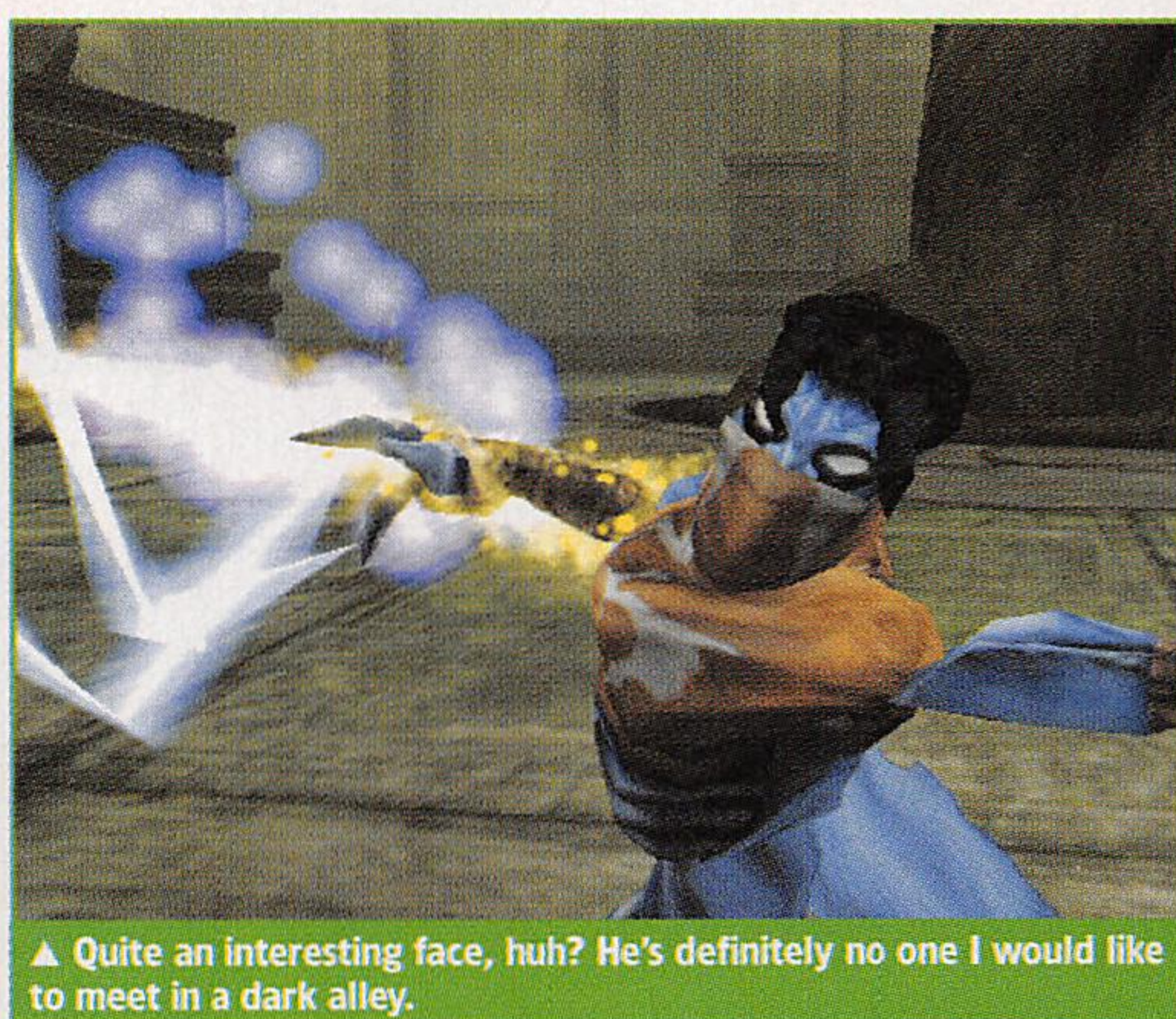
▲ This one is yellow. This could unlock a door, or do something else, but at this point it's still a mystery.



▲ Here it looks like he may be using it as a weapon. Perhaps like Ken and Ryu's fire, and can be used as a projectile attack.



▲ Check out Raziel's cape. Little details such as the tethering and holes gives the game a very dark and creepy look.



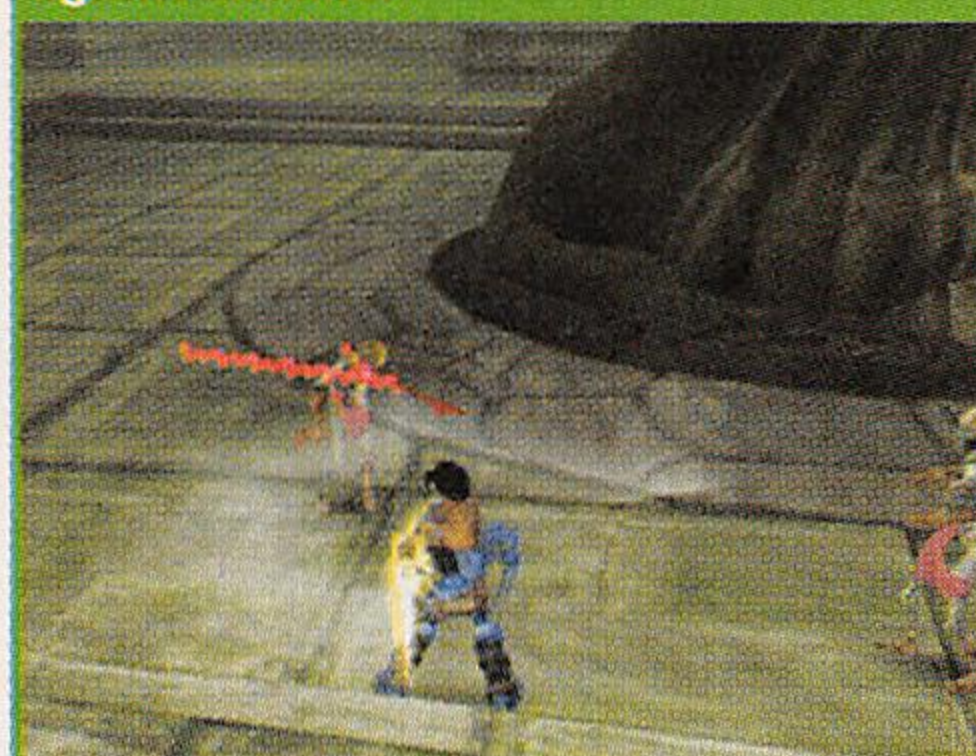
▲ Quite an interesting face, huh? He's definitely no one I would like to meet in a dark alley.

THE FIGHTING

Raziel has a number of moves and weapons at his disposal. Be sure to be familiar with all of them to easily cut down all enemies.



▲ Slicing and dicing enemies shouldn't be too difficult if you use the proper weapons against enemies.



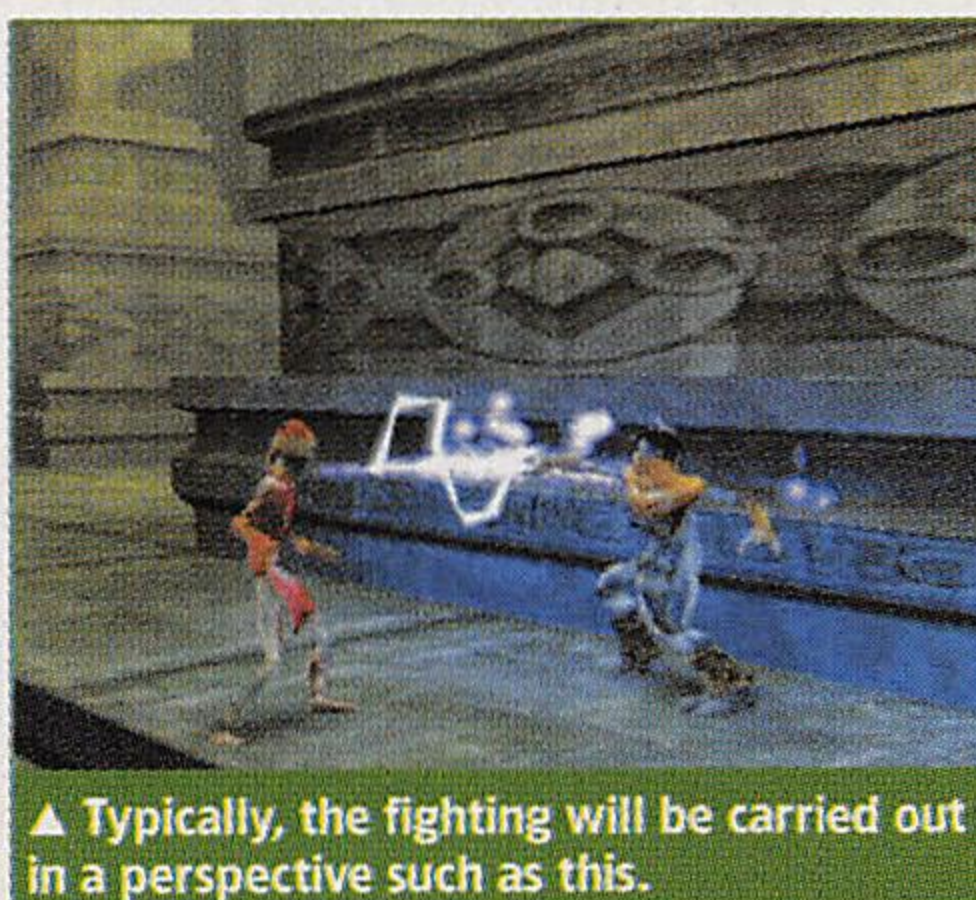
▲ When fighting multiple enemies, it should be easy to keep track of your target, since there is now a lock-on system.



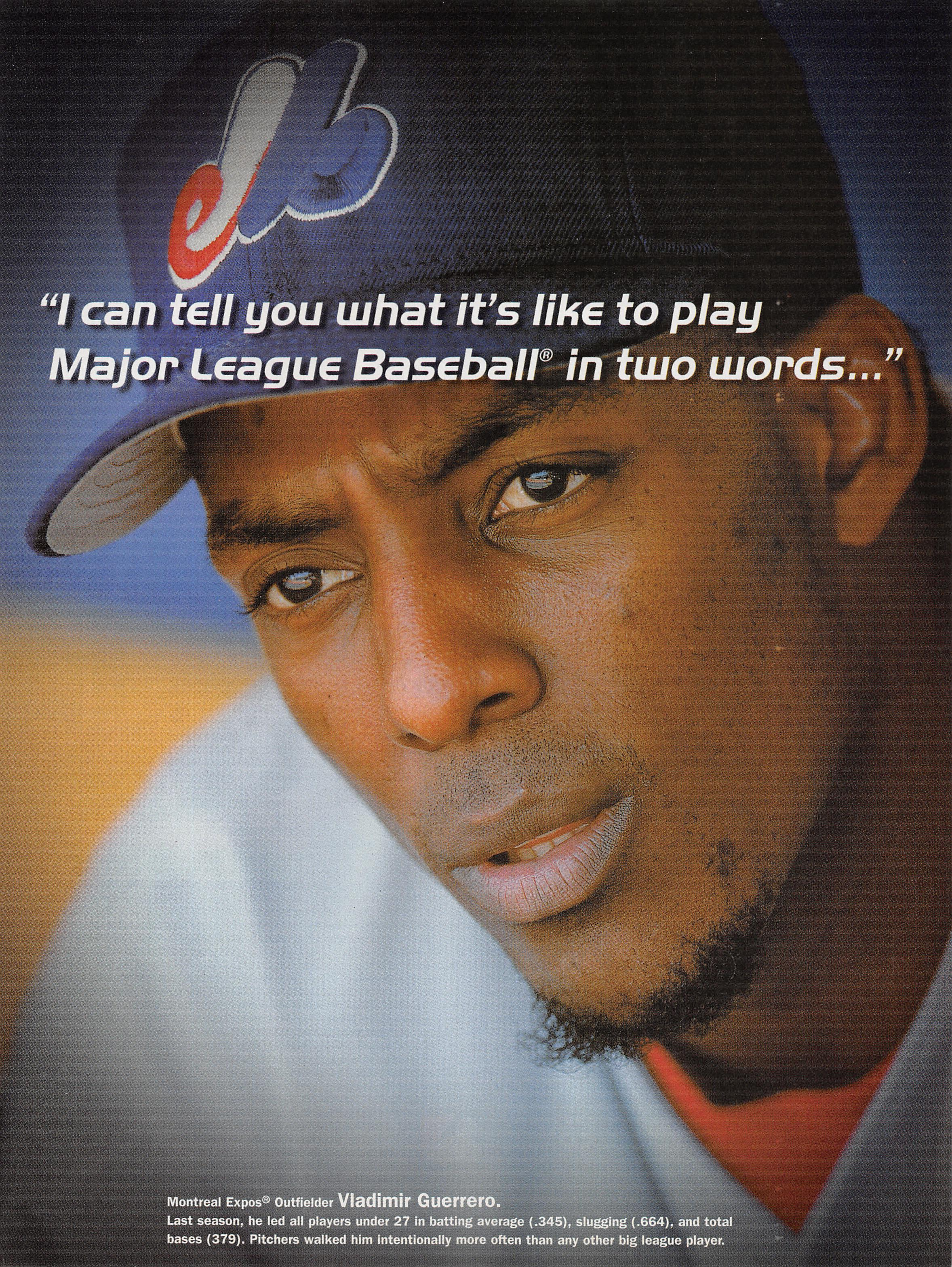
▲ We don't know how to use the environment to inflict damage. Perhaps knocking enemies down the stairs causes damage.



▲ Since Raziel is dead, he'll be required to suck souls for his own energy.



▲ Typically, the fighting will be carried out in a perspective such as this.



***"I can tell you what it's like to play
Major League Baseball® in two words..."***

Montreal Expos® Outfielder **Vladimir Guerrero.**

Last season, he led all players under 27 in batting average (.345), slugging (.664), and total bases (379). Pitchers walked him intentionally more often than any other big league player.

"...High Heat."

Only High Heat™ Major League Baseball® asks the tough questions — and gets the answers right. That's what makes it so amazingly real.

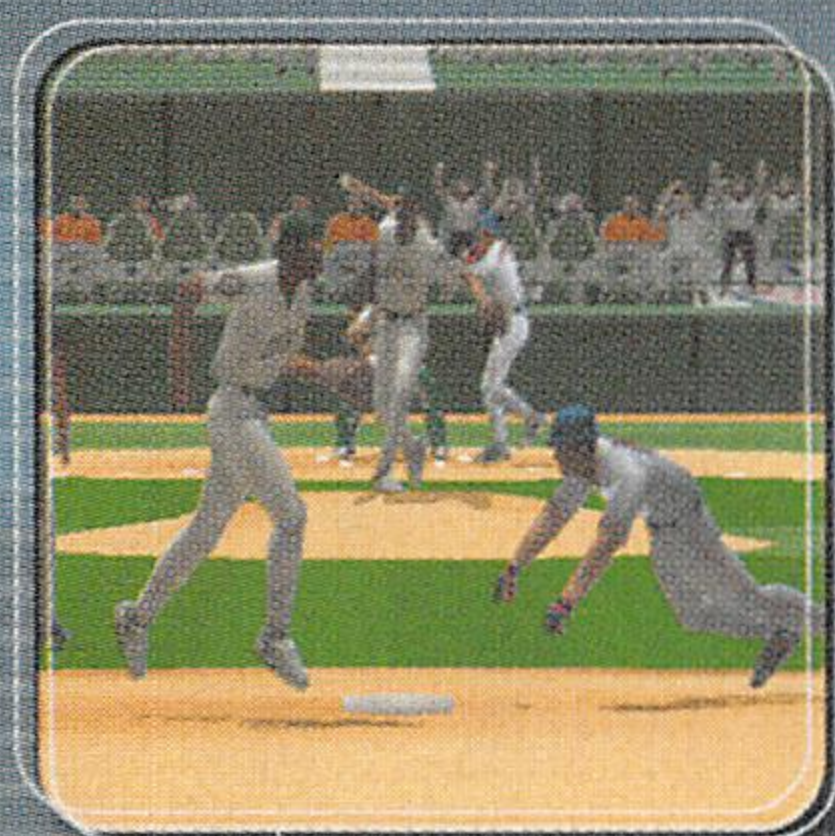
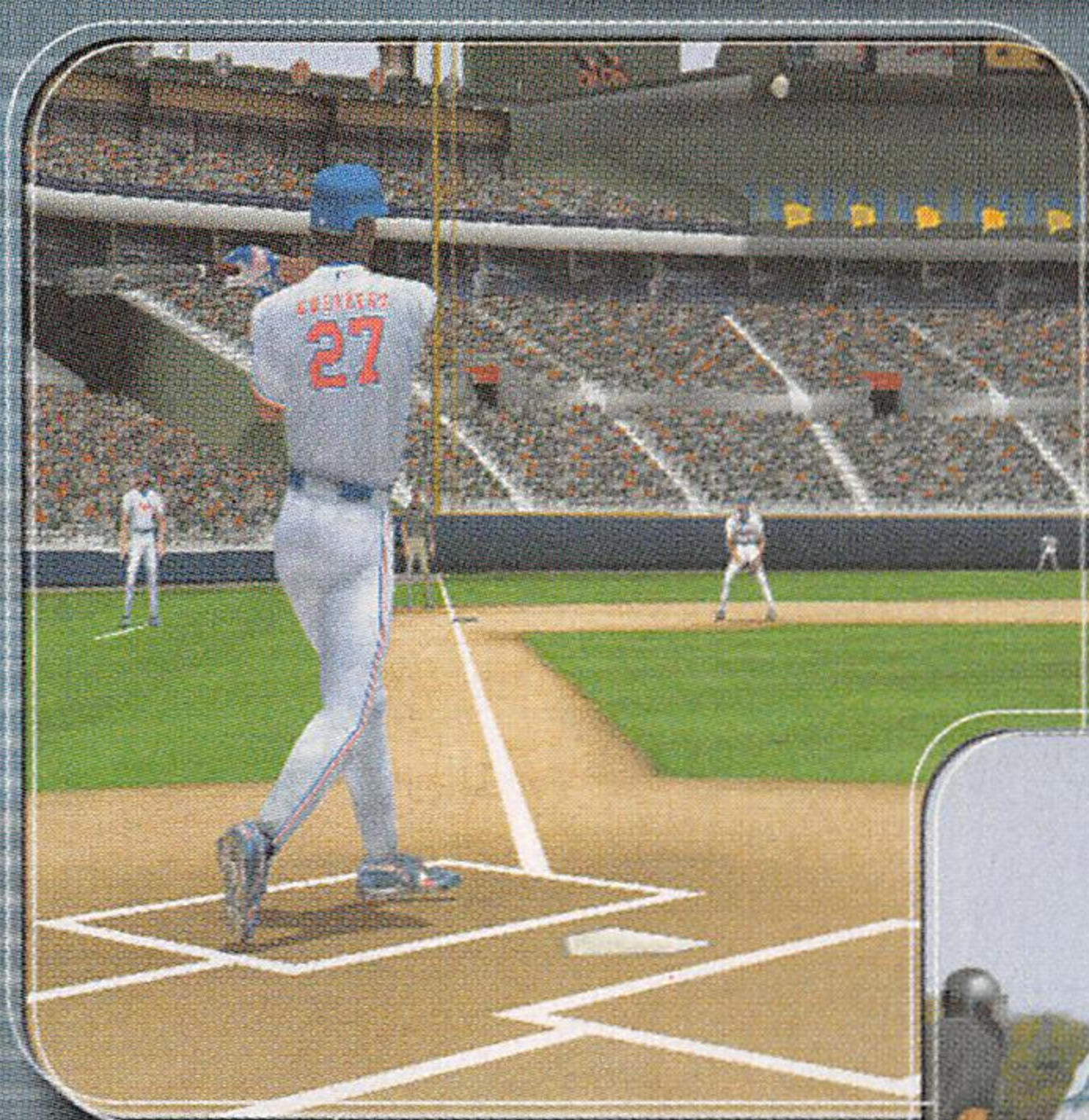
Q: Why did Mark McGwire slug only .257 with two strikes, but 1.310 when ahead in the count?

A: He can guess the pitch more easily when he's ahead...and crush the ball for a mammoth homer. **High Heat's Got It.**

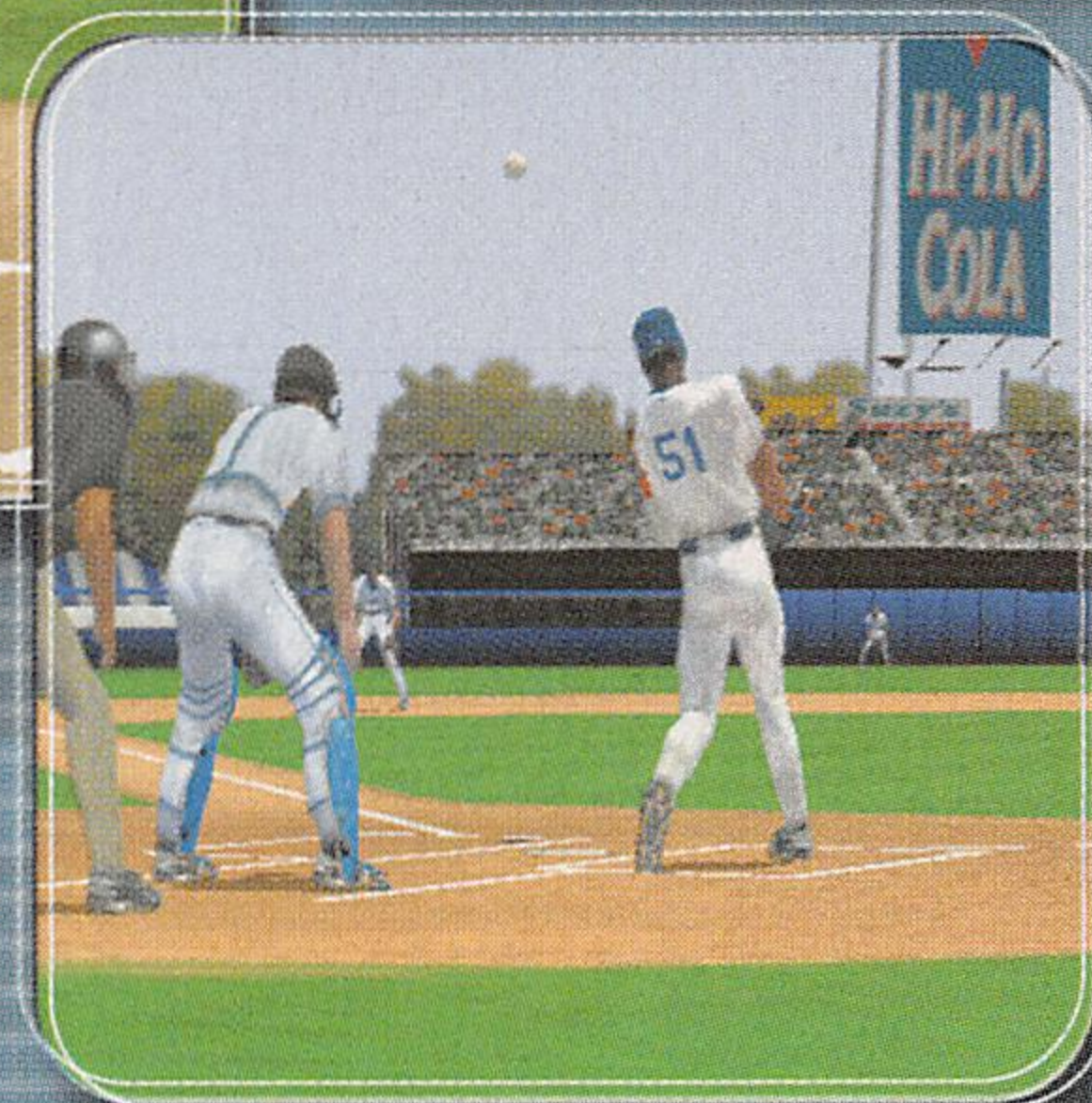


Q: How is Barry Bonds sometimes able to wallop splash-landing homers out of Pac Bell Park?

A: He works the count, then looks for a fastball inside and starts his stride early to pull it into the bay. **High Heat's Got It.**



Screen shots were taken from the PlayStation®2 console and PC versions of the game.



Q: Why should a pitcher make some pickoff throws, but not too many?

A: A few pickoffs shorten runners' leads, but too many can distract the pitcher or result in an error. **High Heat's Got It.**

Q: When Vladimir Guerrero drills the ball down the left field line, will it curve fair or foul?

A: The spin of the ball coming off the bat causes it to curve towards foul territory. **High Heat's Got It.**

Q: When would Kevin Brown waste a pitch and throw a breaking ball in the dirt?

A: On an 0-2 count when the hitter is likely to chase a bad pitch while trying to protect the plate. **High Heat's Got It.**



Available on PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system, PlayStation® game console, Game Boy Color and PC-CD Rom

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"...we might be looking at a Yankees® type of dynasty with High Heat 2002."

— Official PlayStation Magazine (Feb. 2001)

SEQUEL TO:

"This year's best baseball video game."

— Sports Illustrated (Dec. 2000)

Awarded Top 10 Games of All Time and Sports Game of the Year two years running.

— CGW

"The finest baseball game on any system, ever."

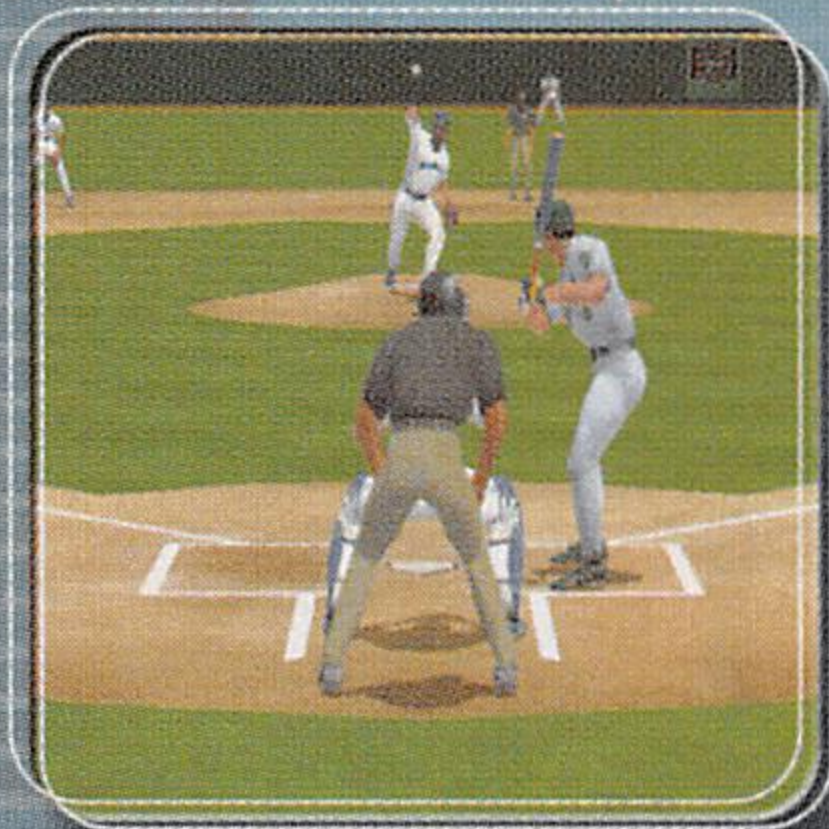
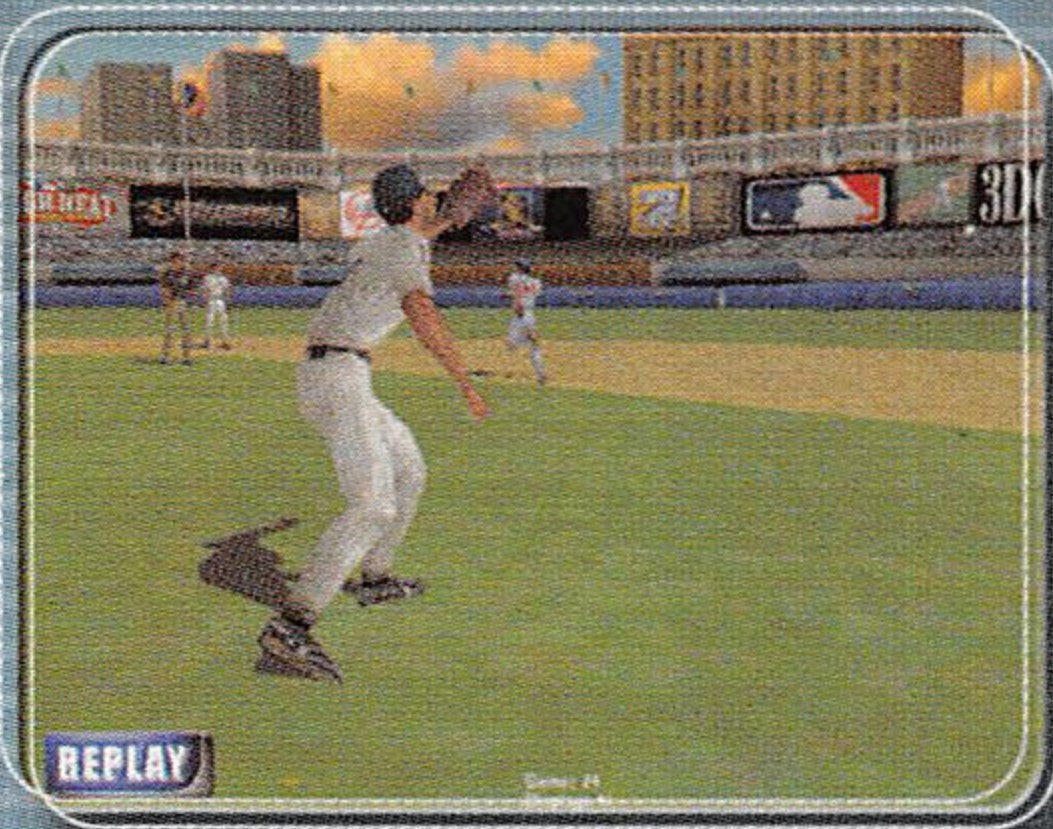
— PC Gamer

Q: What makes Aaron Sele's curve so effective against both righties and lefties?

A: His dead overhead, or "12 to 6" arm motion, makes his curve break nearly straight down against all hitters. **High Heat's Got It.**

Q: What change in strategy helped fuel Frank Thomas' resurgence to MVP form last year?

A: He adjusted to the umpires calling strikes on the inside corner and began looking for inside pitches to pull. **High Heat's Got It.**



REAL. BASEBALL.

Q: On a long throw to the plate, what's the best way to stop a runner from taking an extra base?

A: Use the first baseman to cut off the throw and nail the runner. **High Heat's Got It.**

Q: How can you tell Bernie Williams is batting in Shea Stadium?

A: You hear boos from Mets fans combined with cheers from the cross-town Yankees fans. **High Heat's Got It.**

● REAL PITCHING

● REAL HITTING

● REAL FIELDING & RUNNING

● BETTER A.I.

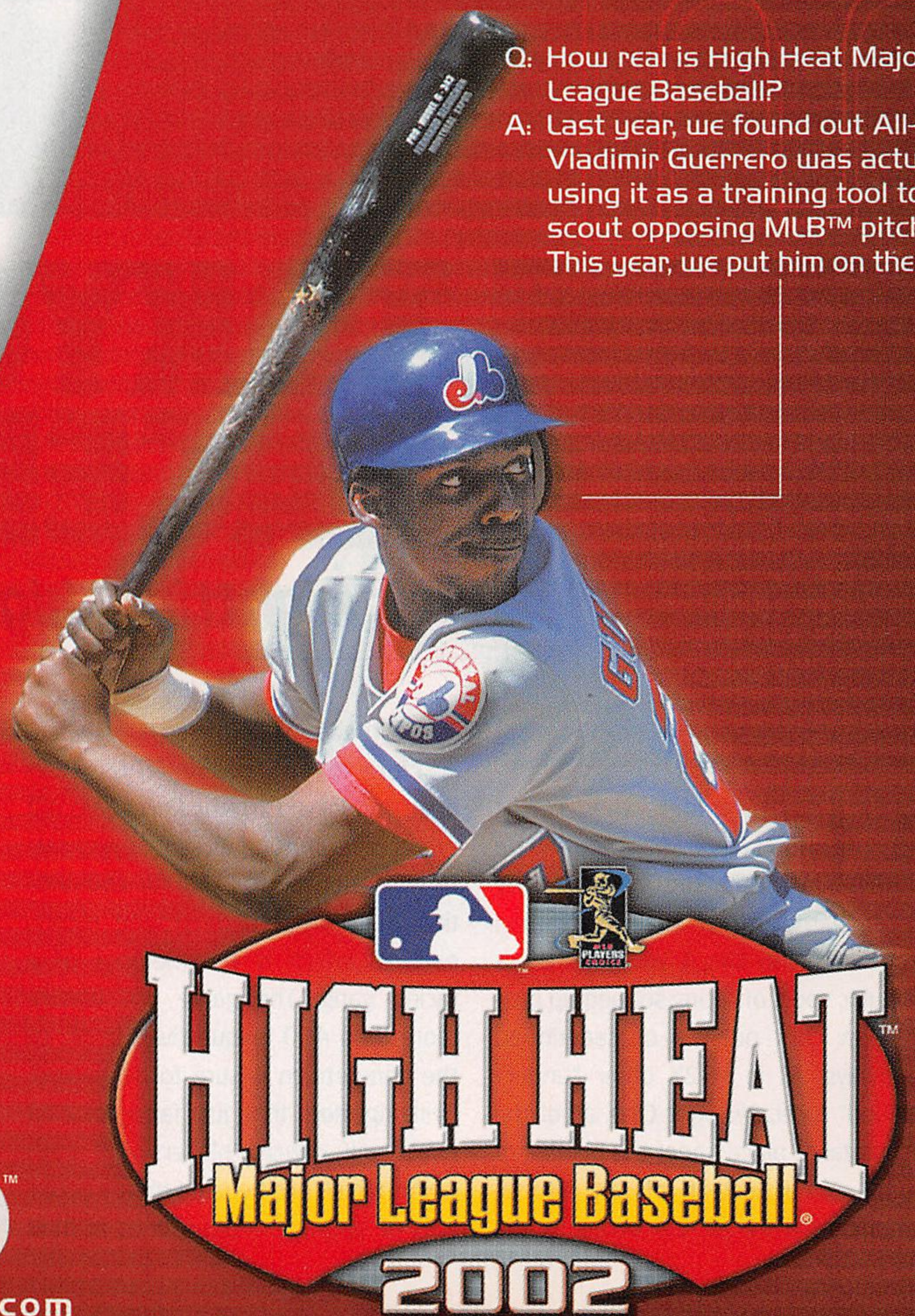
● REAL STRATEGY

● REAL PHYSICS

● ACCURATE ROSTERS

Q: How real is High Heat Major League Baseball?

A: Last year, we found out All-Star Vladimir Guerrero was actually using it as a training tool to scout opposing MLB™ pitchers. This year, we put him on the box.



3DO™

www.highheat.com

HIGH HEAT™
Major League Baseball®
2002

PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	RELEASE DATE	TYPE	# OF PLAYERS	ESRB RATING
CRAVE	GENO	MARCH	RACING	1-2	EVERYONE

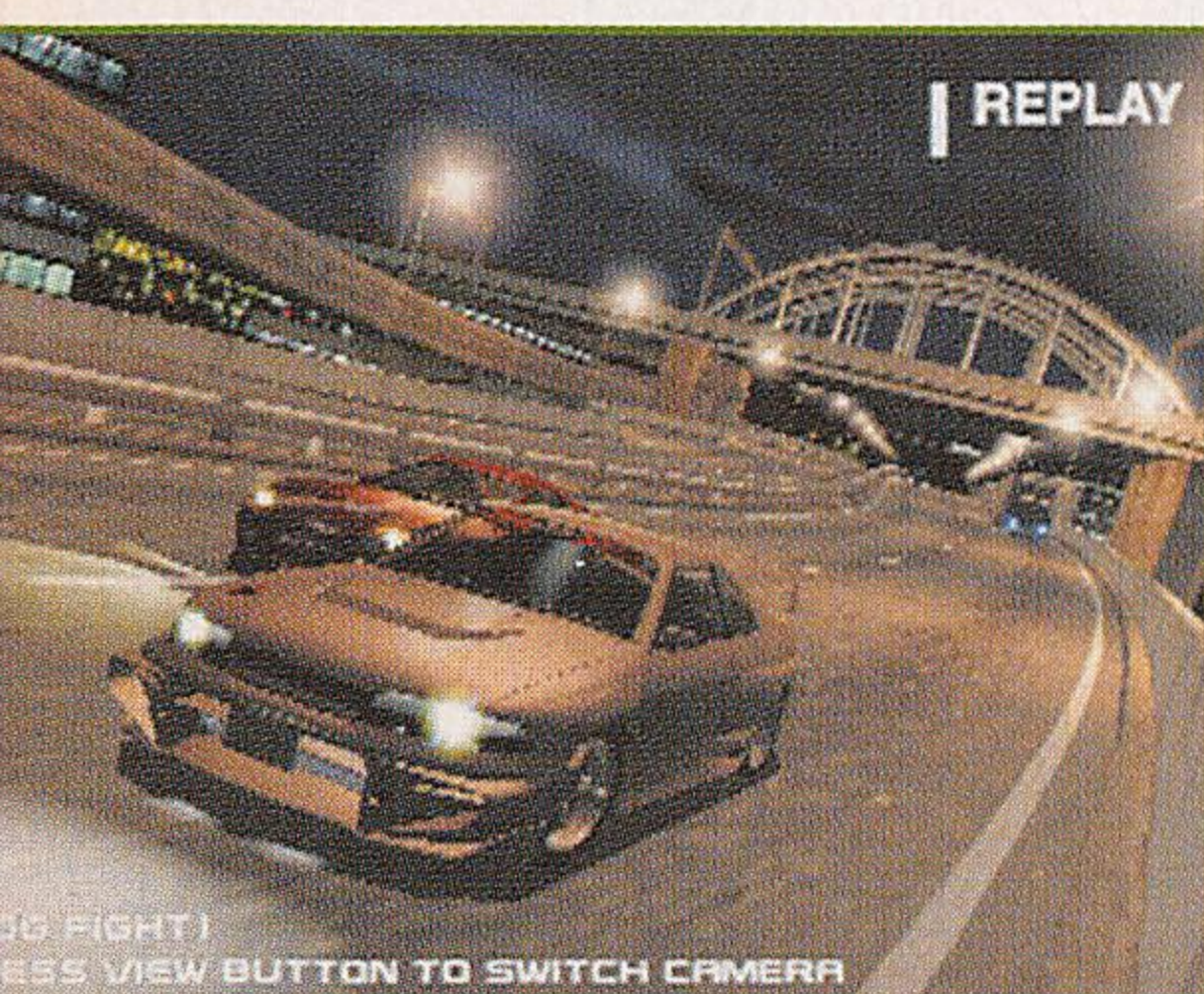
PS2

PERCENT COMPLETE

90%



▲ One-on-one racing action's the name of the game in *TXR Zero*. And since it runs at a constant 60fps, the action's sure to reach a break-neck pace.



▲ There'll be a replay mode, so players can review their best duels after the fact.

TOKYO XTREME RACER ZERO

It's nighttime highway racing — to the extreme!

Known under the series moniker of *Shoutoku Battle* in Japan, the *Tokyo Xtreme Racer* games draw their inspiration from the highly illegal, yet nonetheless popular, sport of racing souped up production cars outside of sanctioned raceways. As in PS2's other "underground" racer, *Midnight Club*, all of the action takes place under the blanket of night — but instead of city streets, ground zero for all the action is the

Tokyo freeway system.

More of a "racing RPG" than anything, *Tokyo Xtreme Racer Zero* will emphasize cruising Tokyo's expansive highway network looking for competition from other underground racers, each of which is the member of a racing gang. The game will feature more than 400 unique rivals in all, so the competition is sure to be heated. Bringing more than just fame, beating rivals will reward players will cash points which can be used to buy better cars or upgrade existing ones in their

▼ Some of the cars are totally original and all of them have loads of upgrade options. ▼ This car, the "Condor", has a weird-looking fin on its hood. Whatever works, I guess!



XTREME SPORTS CARS

While there aren't any officially licensed cars in *TXR Zero*, there are some far-out original autos, including some amazing counterfeits.

the BUZZ

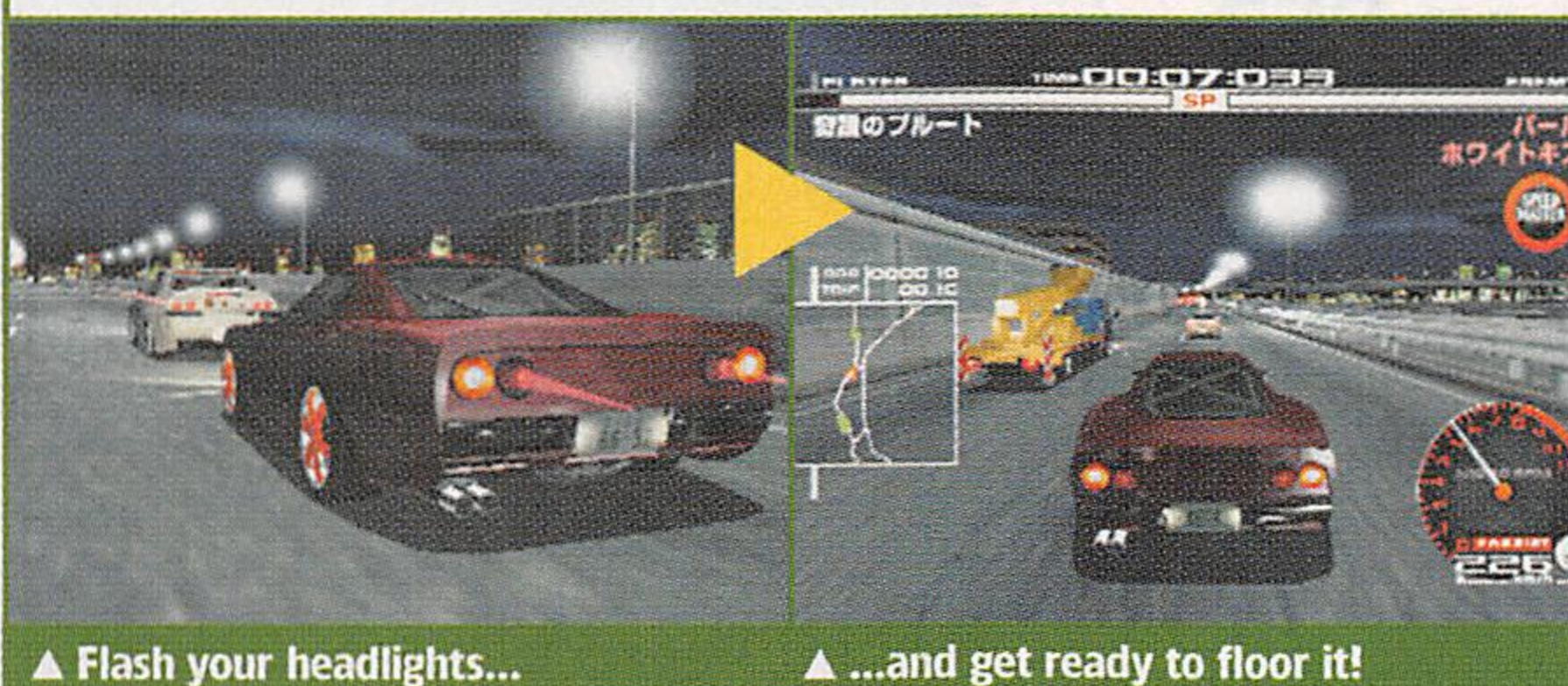
It's a lot different than *GT 3*, but street racing fans will want to keep a close eye on this highly unique racer.

garage. There will be more than 150 different cars in total to obtain (some of which must be unlocked by beating special rivals) covering three classes, and at least 70 individual part upgrades.

Since it's not your average racer, normal racing game win/lose rules won't apply. While cruising the freeways, players will encounter other rivals and then flash their headlights to initiate a duel. When the race begins, a fighting game-style power meter appears for both racers; the more objects players hit, or the farther they fall behind their rival, the lower their meter gets until the race is lost. There'll also be other traffic on the highways, so not only will players' reflexes be put to the test, but also their ability to outwit rivals by cutting them off or

LET'S GET IT ON!

Players flash their headlights at a rival's car from behind. If they accept the challenge, it's pedal to the metal time.



▲ Flash your headlights...

▲ ...and get ready to floor it!

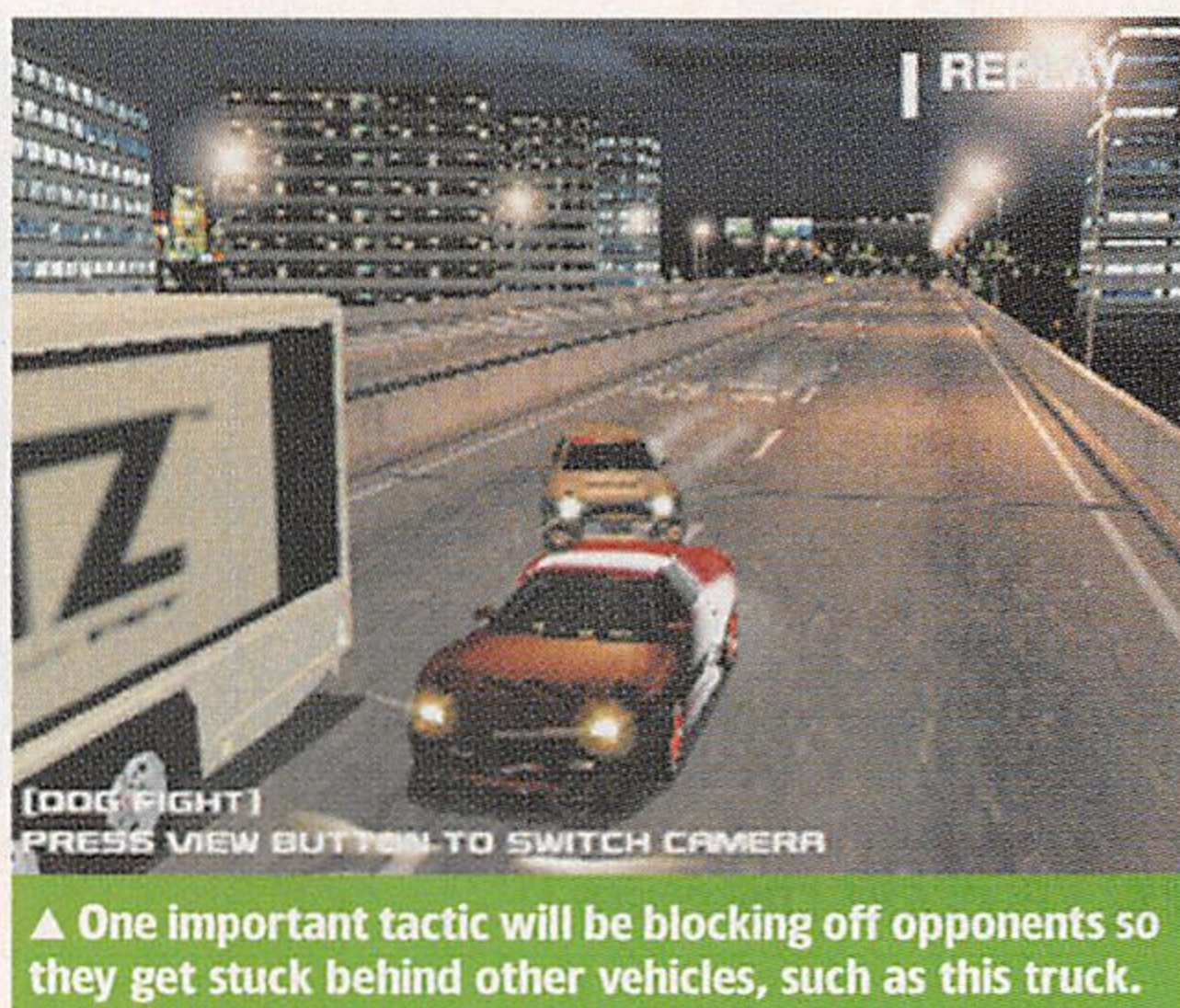
nudging them into other vehicles to slow them down.

So far, the game is looking quite a bit better than its predecessors on Dreamcast. The car

models have received a significant boost in polygon count and the action never dips below a blistering 60 frames-per-second. And although everything takes place at night, there'll still be tons of road side detail, such as moving monorails, Ferris wheels, and airliners.

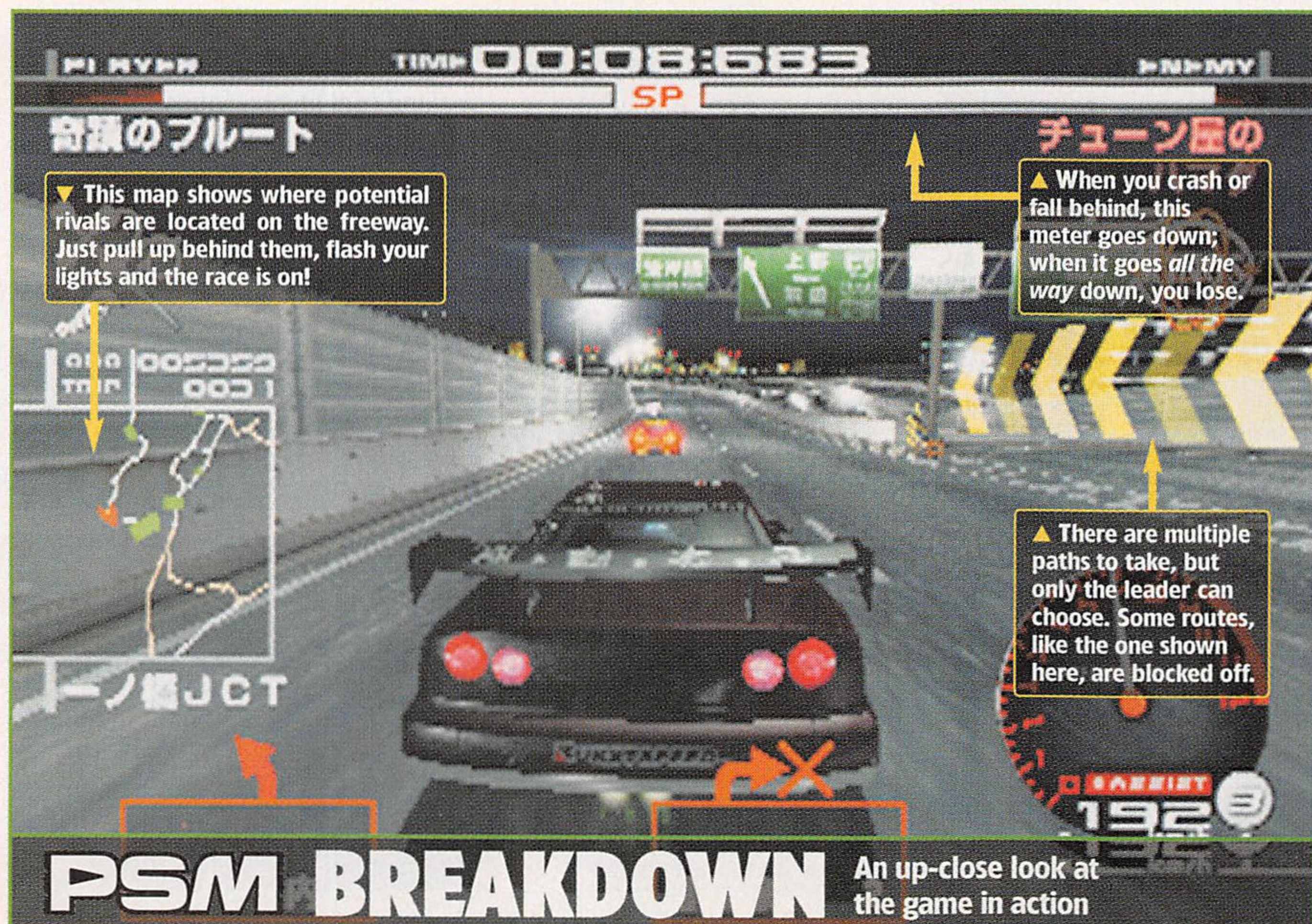
As unique as it is fast at this stage, *Tokyo Extreme Racer Zero* will be hitting the streets on this side of the Pacific before you know it. Look for a full review soon in the pages of PSM.

► Randy Nelson



▲ One important tactic will be blocking off opponents so they get stuck behind other vehicles, such as this truck.

"Not only will players' reflexes be put to the test, but also their ability to outwit rivals by cutting them off or nudging them into other vehicles to slow them down"

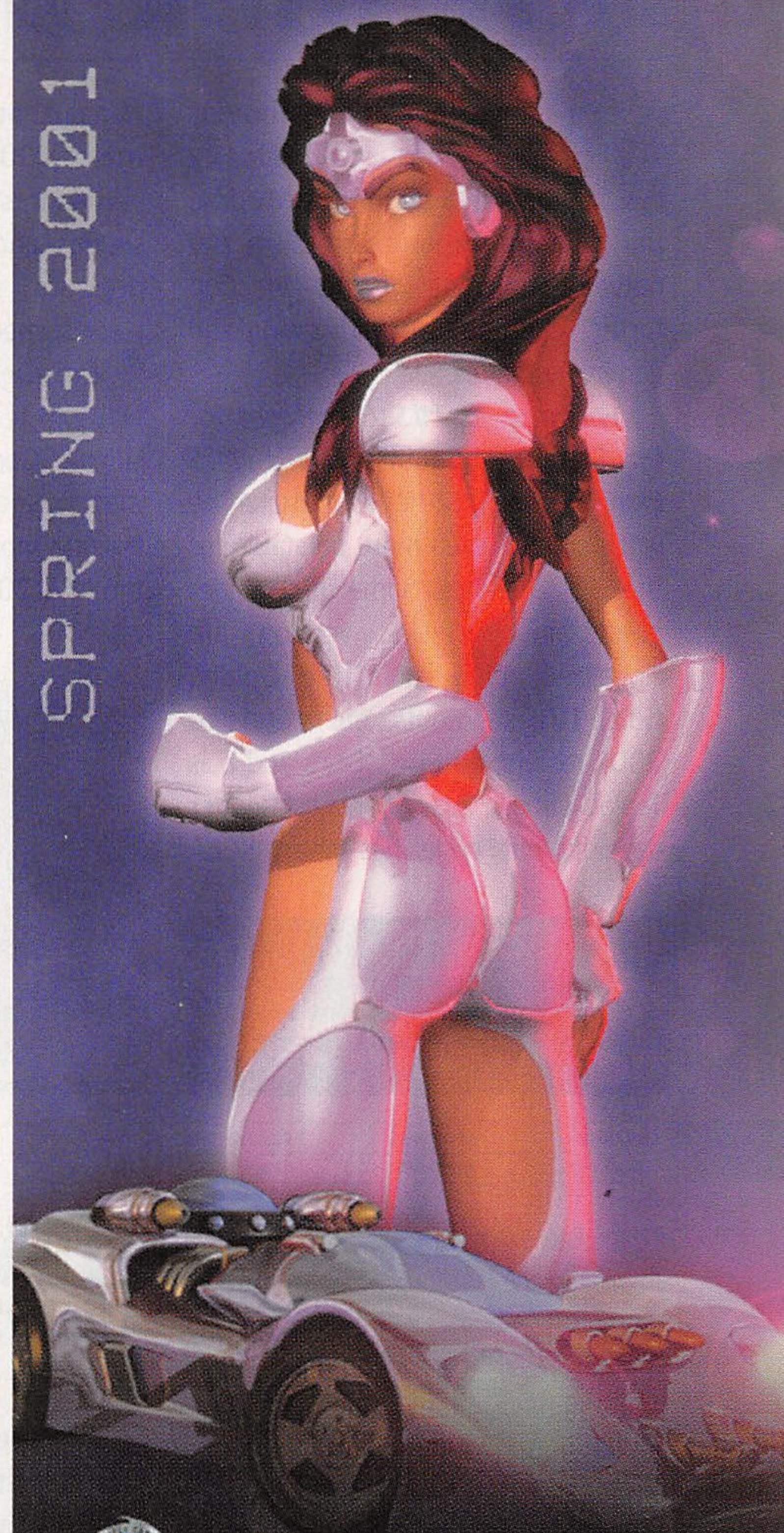


PSM BREAKDOWN

An up-close look at the game in action

In This League,
It's Victory...
Or Bust.

SPRING 2001



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PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	RELEASE DATE	TYPE	# OF PLAYERS	ESRB RATING
KONAMI	KONAMI	MARCH	SOCCER	1-2	EVERYONE

PS2

PERCENT COMPLETE

95%

ESPN MLS EXTRATIME

Konami hosts the world's game on PS2

The world's most popular sport has traditionally gotten a bum rap stateside.

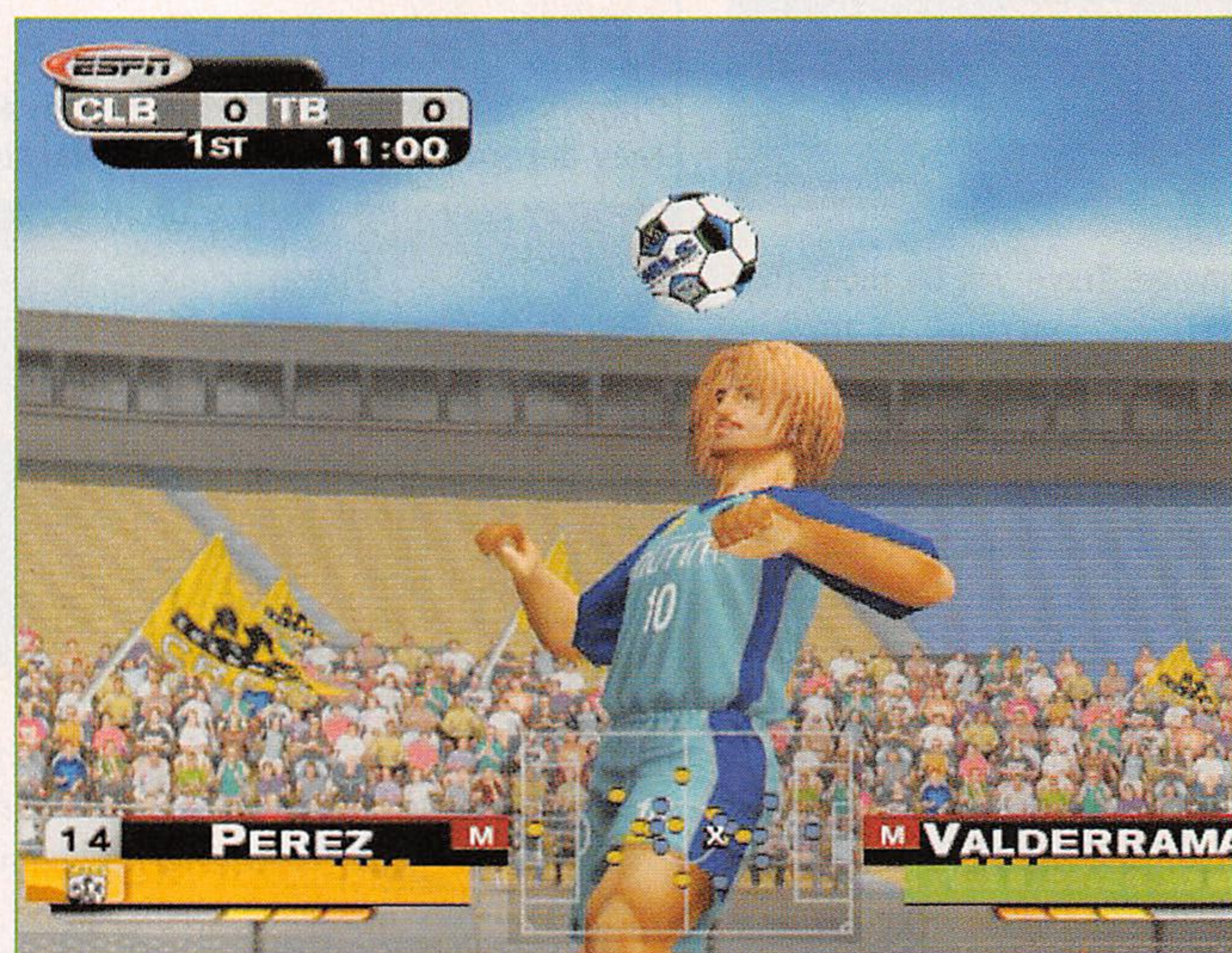
But increased exposure on ESPN and network coverage of the '94 Cup further cultivated a loyal viewing and gaming audience.

Following its *MLS GameNight* for PlayStation, Konami's *ESPN MLS ExtraTime* for PS2 hopes to make the world's game even more palatable for the U.S. audience. Some of the finer points in the U.S. version are "localized" MLS rules (the Golden Goal, 1V1 shootouts, etc.), updated 2001 rosters, and Bob Ley's and Luis Tapia's familiar play-by-play. A longer development cycle has given KCEA

Honolulu more time to flesh out more than 400 character animations, authentic stadium design and crowd sounds and animations, and analog pressure sensitivity for selected passes, speed boosts and shooting.

ExtraTime features more than 60 playable teams, and 53 international sides. Gameplay modes include match, season, Cup scenario, and training mode. Kick off is just prior to the MLS 2001 season opener in April.

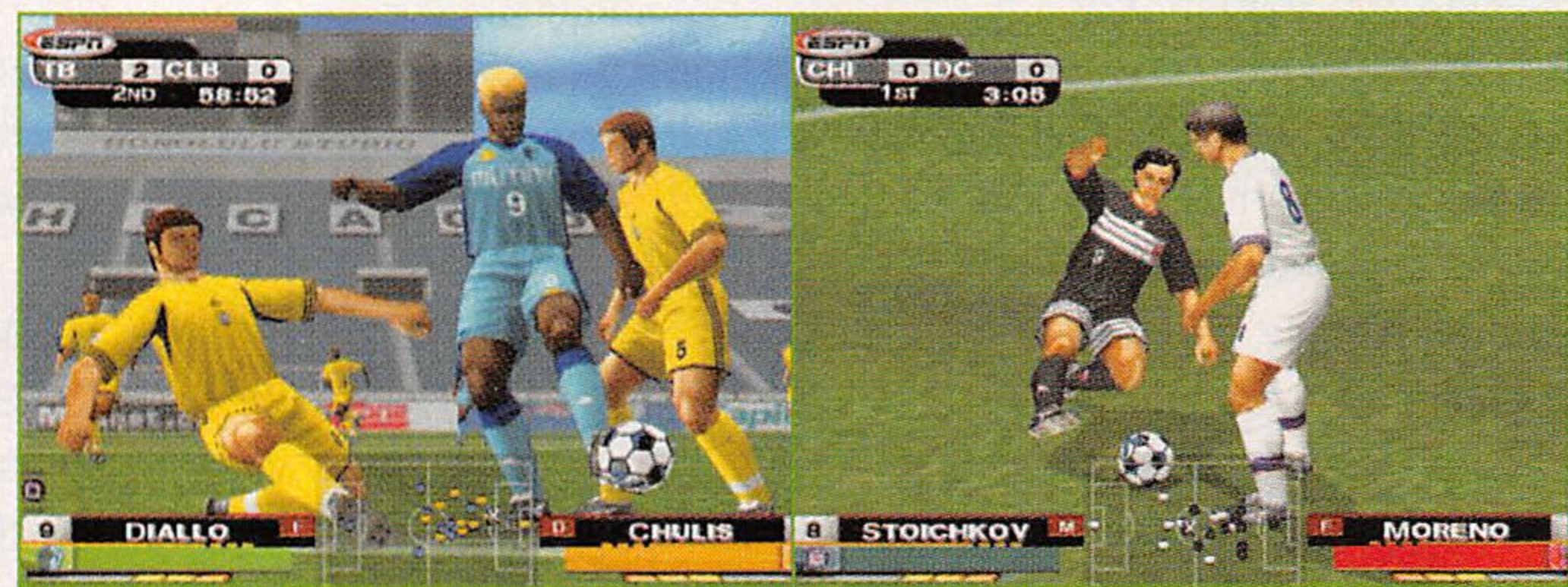
► **Tommy Layton**



▲ Konami's ISS engine should do poster boy Carlos Valderrama's hairdo justice.



▲ Lassiter now plays for the Wizards.



▲ You'll have to slide to contain the likes of Diallo and Stoichkov.

the BUZZ

From Konami's rich history of soccer titles, *ExtraTime* localizes the game with the help of the ESPN license. Goooooooooal!

PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	RELEASE DATE	TYPE	# OF PLAYERS	ESRB RATING
CODINGMASTERS	JESTER INTERACTIVE	APRIL	MUSIC	1	EVERYONE

PS2

PERCENT COMPLETE

65%

MTV MUSIC GENERATOR 2

The PS2 does more than just play games

One of the most innovative titles on the PSone, the first *Music Generator*

provided an easy way for gamers to create their own music tracks. Now,

the sequel looks to take all the great features of its predecessor and build upon them in a major way.

Thanks to the enhanced audio capabilities of the PS2, there's now a lot more that you can do as far as arranging instruments and adding special effects. There's also a whopping 48 music channels available now, which is double what the PSone version had. This should allow for a far greater level of creative freedom.

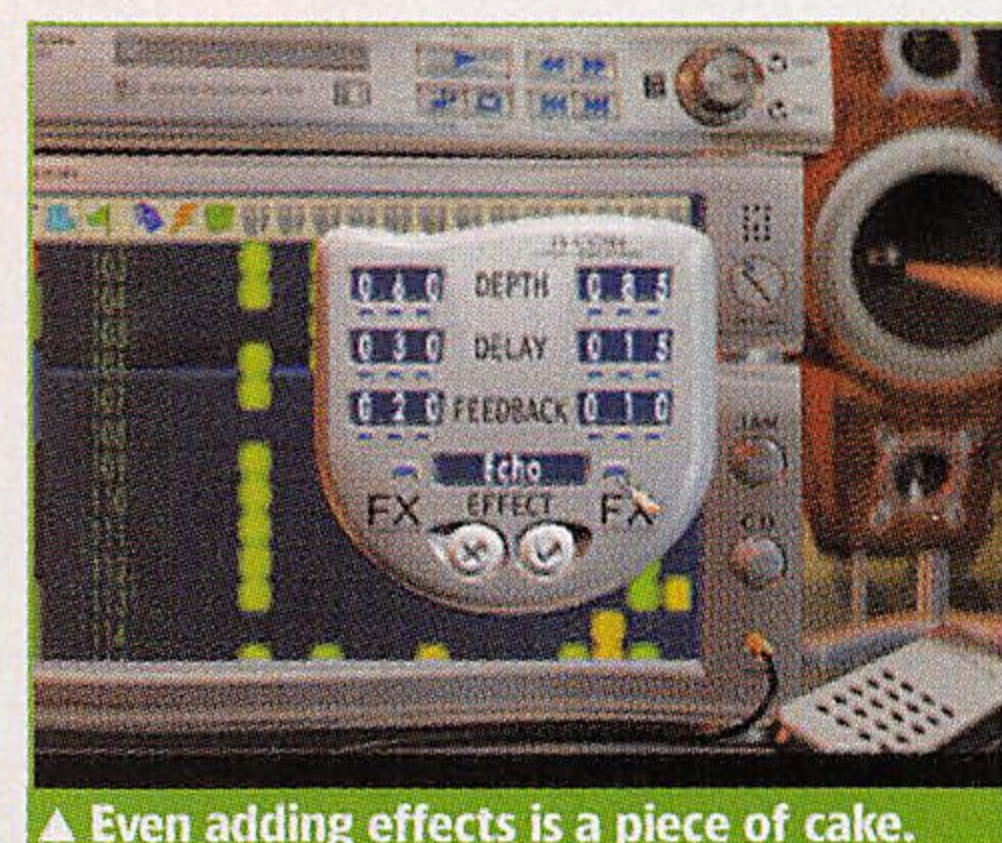
To make things even more interesting, the developers are thinking of

including a special USB device that will allow you to record samples of your own voice or other sounds and include them in the songs. That means that making cool techno songs shouldn't be a problem at all. You music fans out there definitely have something to look forward to come this April.

► **Stephen Frost**

the BUZZ

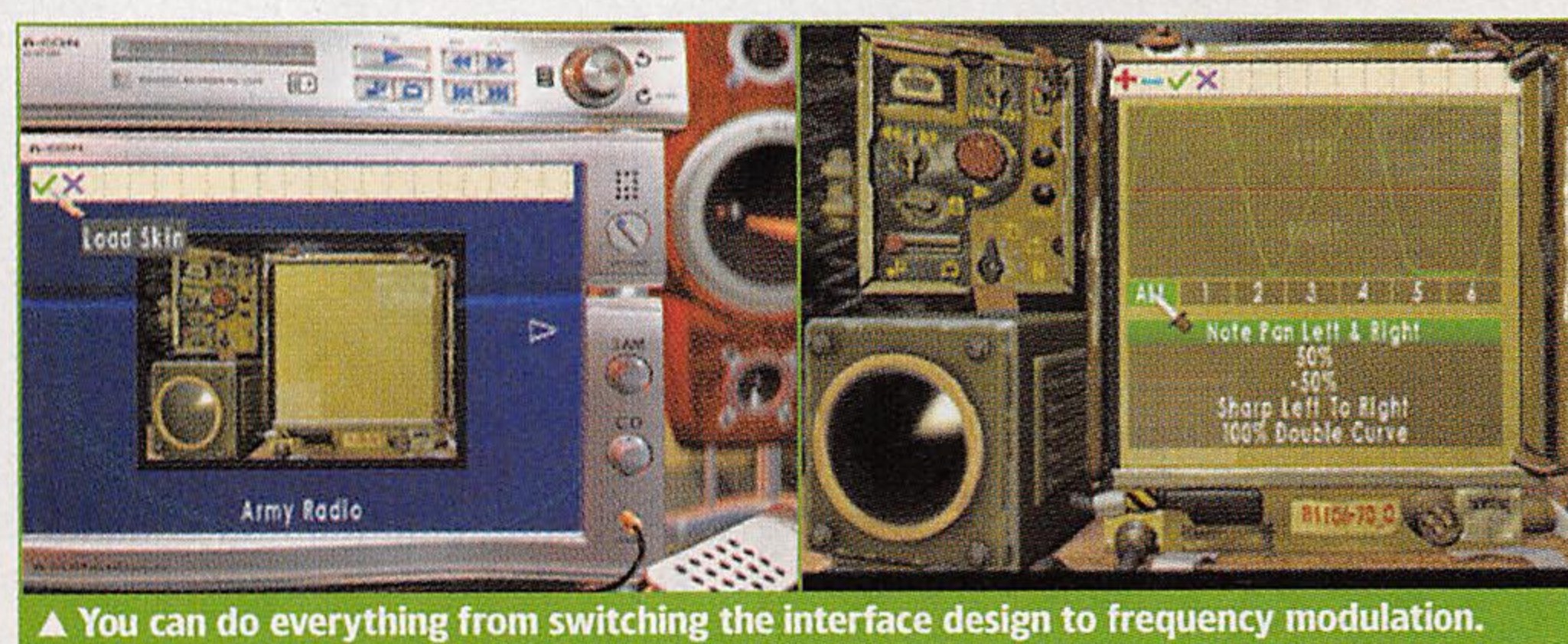
This is just the ticket for music fans who want to create their own mixes without laying out a ton of cash for pro gear.



▲ Even adding effects is a piece of cake.



▲ This army radio design is just one of the many different skins you can select from.



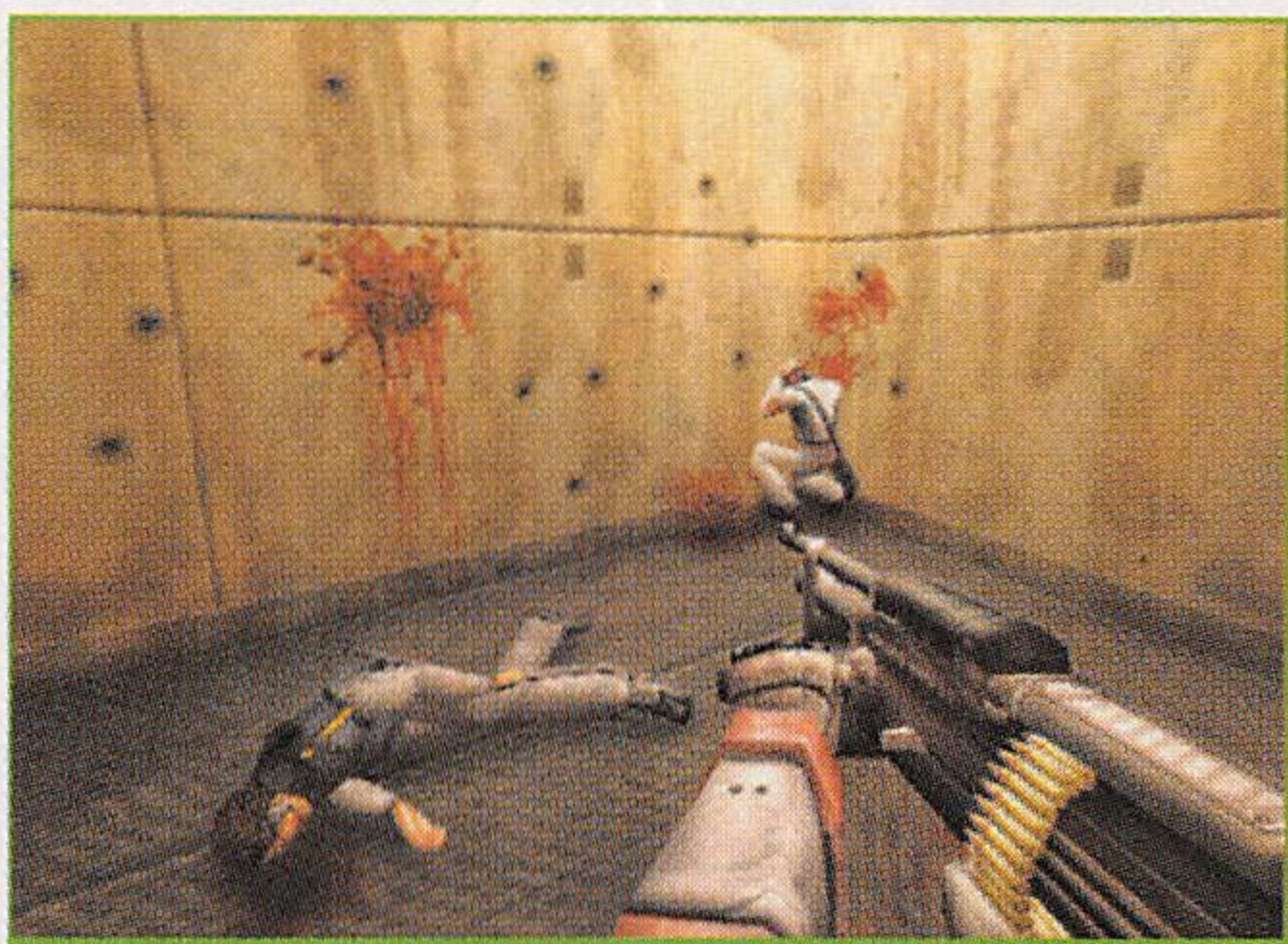
▲ You can do everything from switching the interface design to frequency modulation.

PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	RELEASE DATE	TYPE	# OF PLAYERS	ESRB RATING
THQ	VOLITION	MAY	FIRST PERSON SHOOTER	1-2	MATURE

PS2

PERCENT COMPLETE

90%



▲ Real-time bullet holes are the least of the Geo-Mod engine's capabilities. Other weapons blast walls down.



▲ The story takes you deep into Martian mines, where there will be plenty of people and things to blow away.

RED FACTION

A double-take on the FPS

As you salivate over these new *Red Faction* screens, with eyes glazed, keep in mind that the entirety of the 3D environment can be blown to high heaven with real-time damage modeling. This magnificent prospect is afforded us by Volition's Geometric Modification engine (Geo-Mod), a stellar piece of code that makes us reconsider the nature of interactivity in videogames. Even though by "modify" we generally mean "destroy," this and other technological innovations stand to advance the standards of the console FPS, partly because *Red Faction* is steeped in the most cherished features of its PC FPS predecessors.

In development simultaneously for PS2 and PC, *Red Faction* takes an arsenal of 14 weapons inspired largely by our favorite deathmatchers (*Quake III*, *Unreal Tournament*) and sets them to task in more than 20 hours of a

story-driven single-player experience. Riddle me this: What do you get when you combine *Soldier of Fortune*'s skeletal animation system, location-based damage, and well-rounded selection of death animations; *Tribes 2*'s ability to switch from running and gunning to piloting several vehicles without cumbersome loading screens; and the thoroughly engaging, ambient experience of the plot-driven *Half-Life*? Answer: *Red Faction* (duh), and an FPS worth waiting for, even though the release date has slipped from March to May.

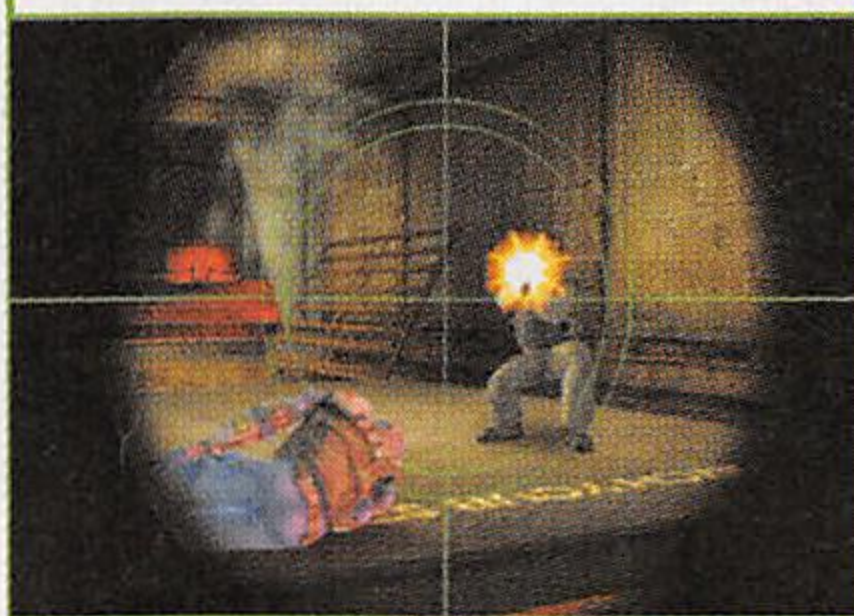
► Tommy Layton

the BUZZ

From the great arsenal, to operable vehicles, to real-time Geometric Modification, this FPS has it all.

PACKIN' HEAT

Rail guns, flamethrowers, sniper rifles, explosives, a riot stick and an oversized novelty bazooka.

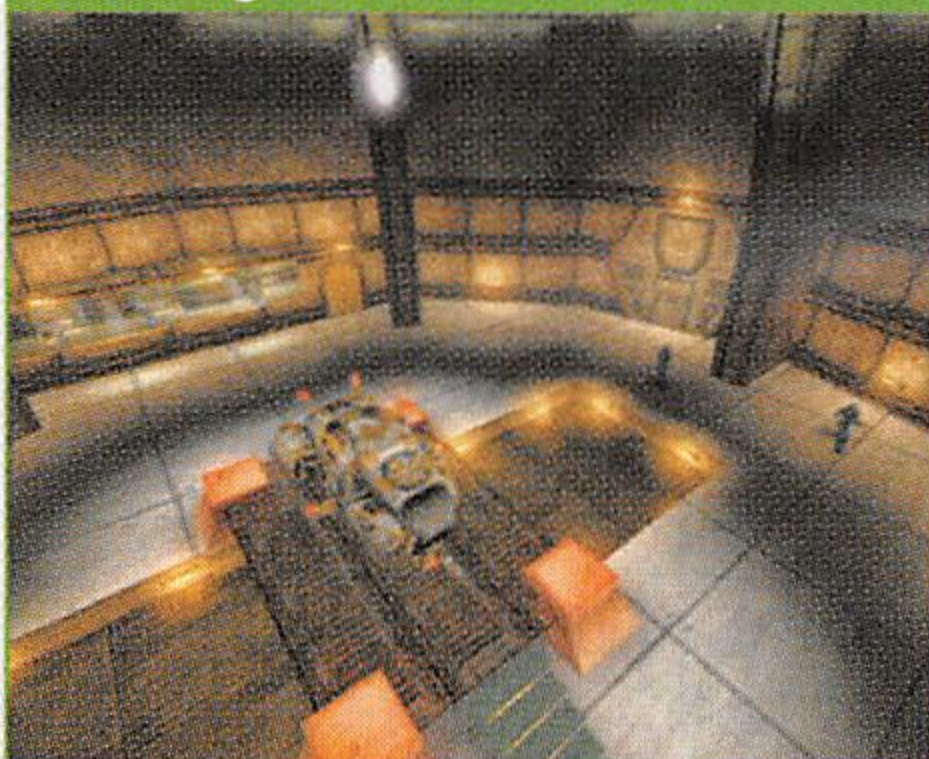


▲ Death comes in many forms...



▲ ...14, to be exact.

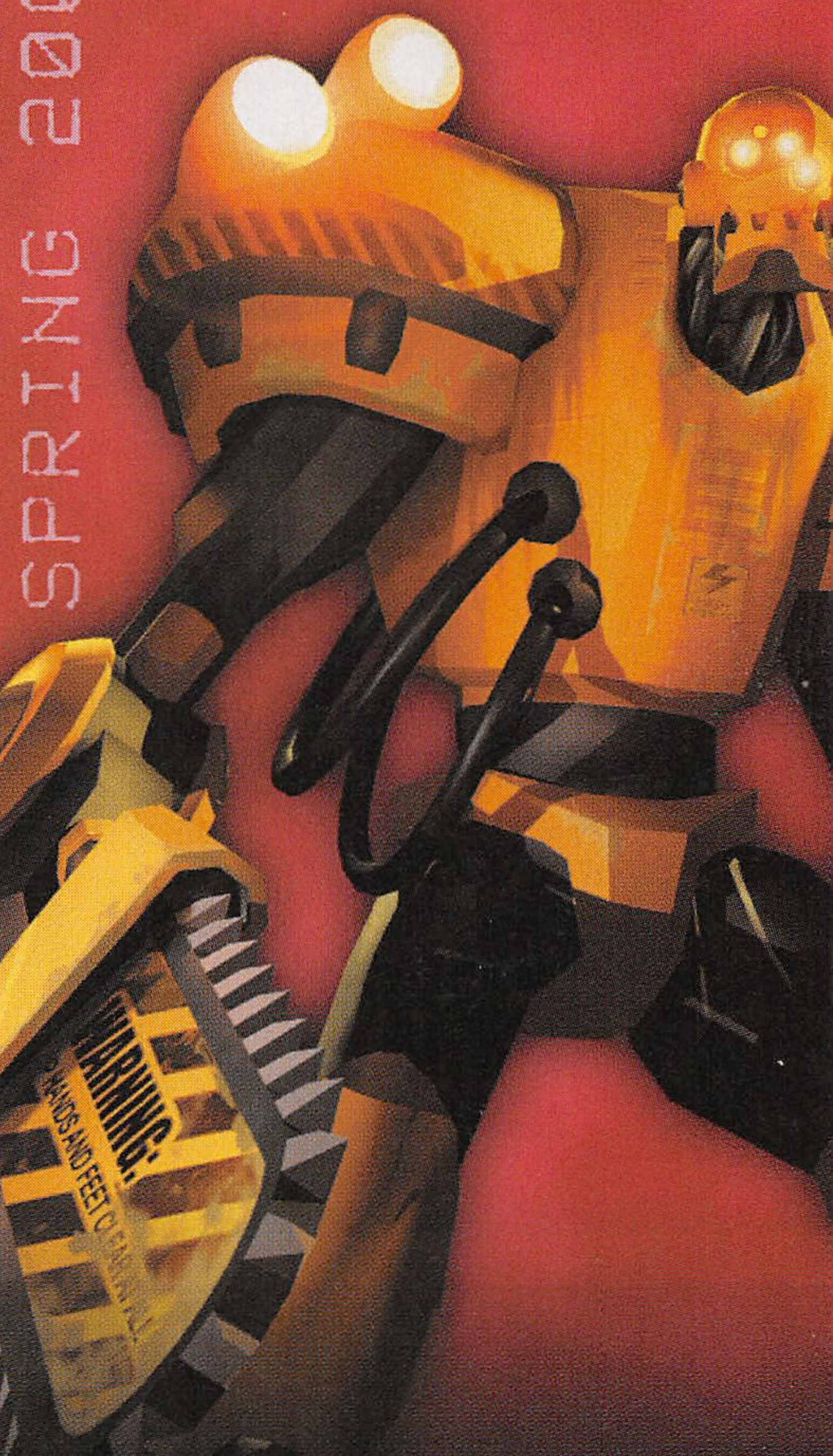
▼ Blast your way down to that vehicle and then get behind the wheel.



▲ It's a Mexican standoff gone awry, but the reflecting pool is nice.

In This League,
There's A Good Reason
Nobody Shakes Hands
Before A Match.

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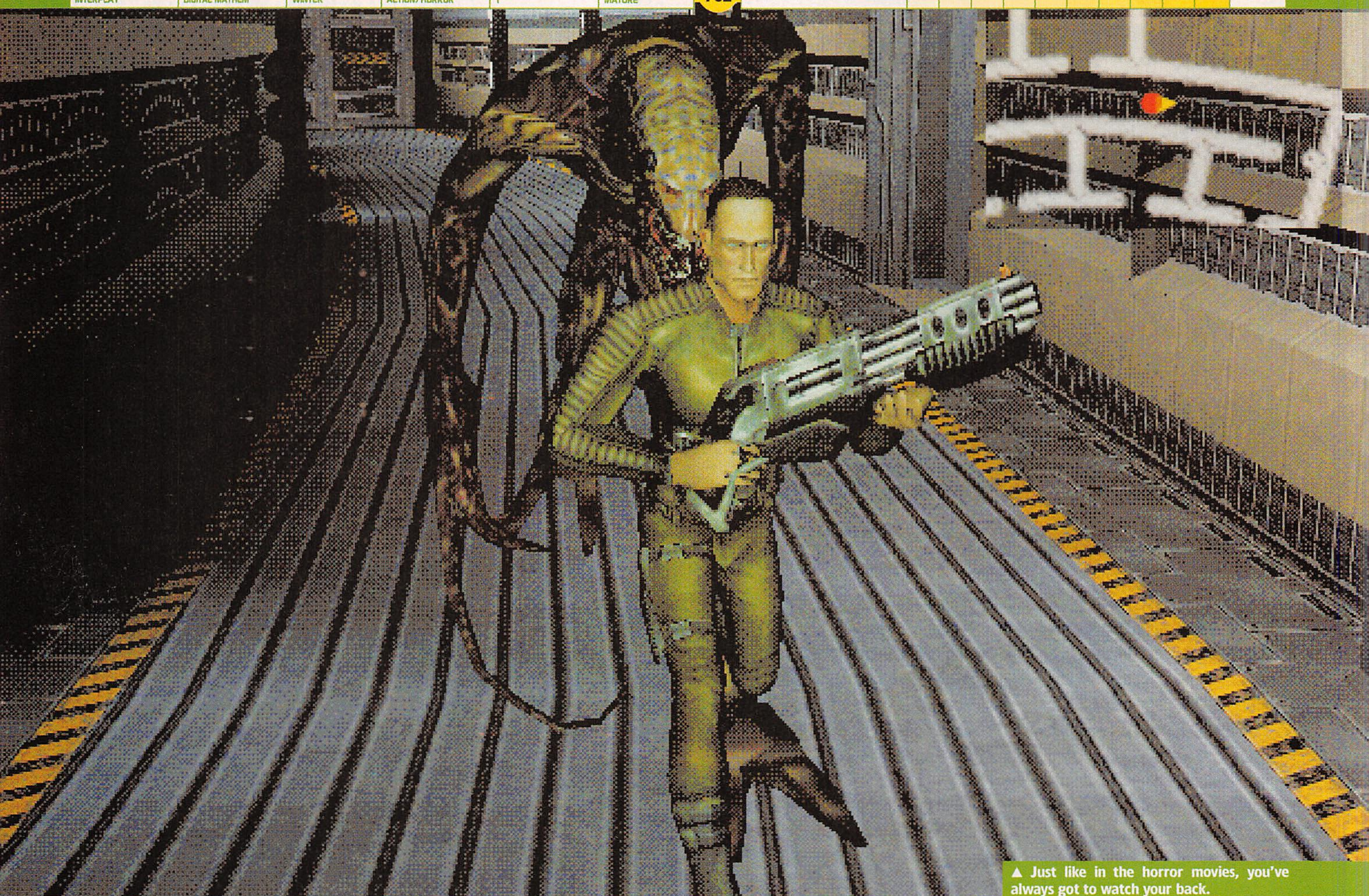
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PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	RELEASE DATE	TYPE	# OF PLAYERS	ESRB RATING
INTERPLAY	DIGITAL MAYHEM	WINTER	ACTION/HORROR	1	MATURE

PS2

PERCENT COMPLETE

60%



▲ Just like in the horror movies, you've always got to watch your back.



▲ It's called *Run Like Hell* because that's what you're basically doing all the time.

RUN LIKE HELL

Can Interplay deliver the scariest game ever?

Headed into development, the folks at Digital Mayhem had one goal for *Run Like Hell*. They wanted it to be the scariest and most disturbing game ever. Basically, imagine *Aliens* meets *The Thing*, but even more terrifying. This is going to be one of those games that even Jill Valentine would be afraid of.

Players will find themselves in the reluctant boots of Nick, a military hero who's unfortunately been exiled to a

deep-space mining station. Returning from a flight, he discovers that everyone on the station has either died or is close to dying. After a bit of reconnaissance, Nick determines that a savage alien race is responsible for the atrocities he's just witnessed. Now, it's up to you to help our hero survive and eliminate the alien threat. And it's not going to be easy.

The main difference between this title and others in the genre is that the focus is not only on the action. Gamers are going to have to think their way out of a lot of situations. That's because several of the aliens can't be killed in conventional manners. Not only that; they'll also adapt to your actions and

become "smarter". Don't worry, though, because there's still going to be plenty of aliens you can shoot. That means that the body count is going to

be rather high, which is good for all you Rambos out there.

To give the game that Hollywood flair, the developers have enlisted the

▼ He's strong, but slow.



▼ This guy will eat you alive.



ALIEN ENCOUNTER

There's going to be a large variety of aliens to discover and all of them look pretty nasty. They act nasty, as well...



▲ The last thing you want to see is this big thing heading your way.

voice talents of Lance Henriksen (*Aliens*, *Hard Target*) and Kate Mulgrew of *Star Trek: Voyager* fame. Obviously, Lance is going to play Nick, but it's unknown what role Kate will take on — a love interest, perhaps? Regardless, this should at least help *Run Like Hell* avoid the *Resident Evil*-quality dialog that most gamers have unfortunately become accustomed to.

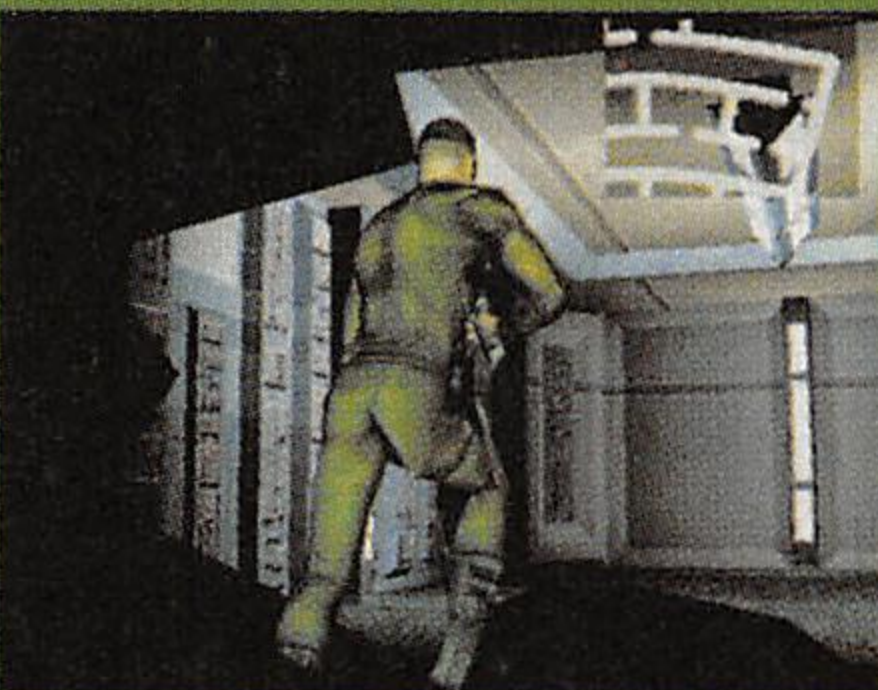
Considering it's been in development for over a year and a half and still won't be completed until late this year, *Run Like Hell* is looking to be a major title to look forward to. Will it end up being

the BUZZ

With bizarre aliens and incredible mayhem, *RLH* should be scarier than all the *Resident Evils* combined.

SCARY AS HELL

The really scary thing about this game is that you never quite know when the enemy is going to attack.



▲ There's a lot of areas on the ship that are covered in darkness. Scary!

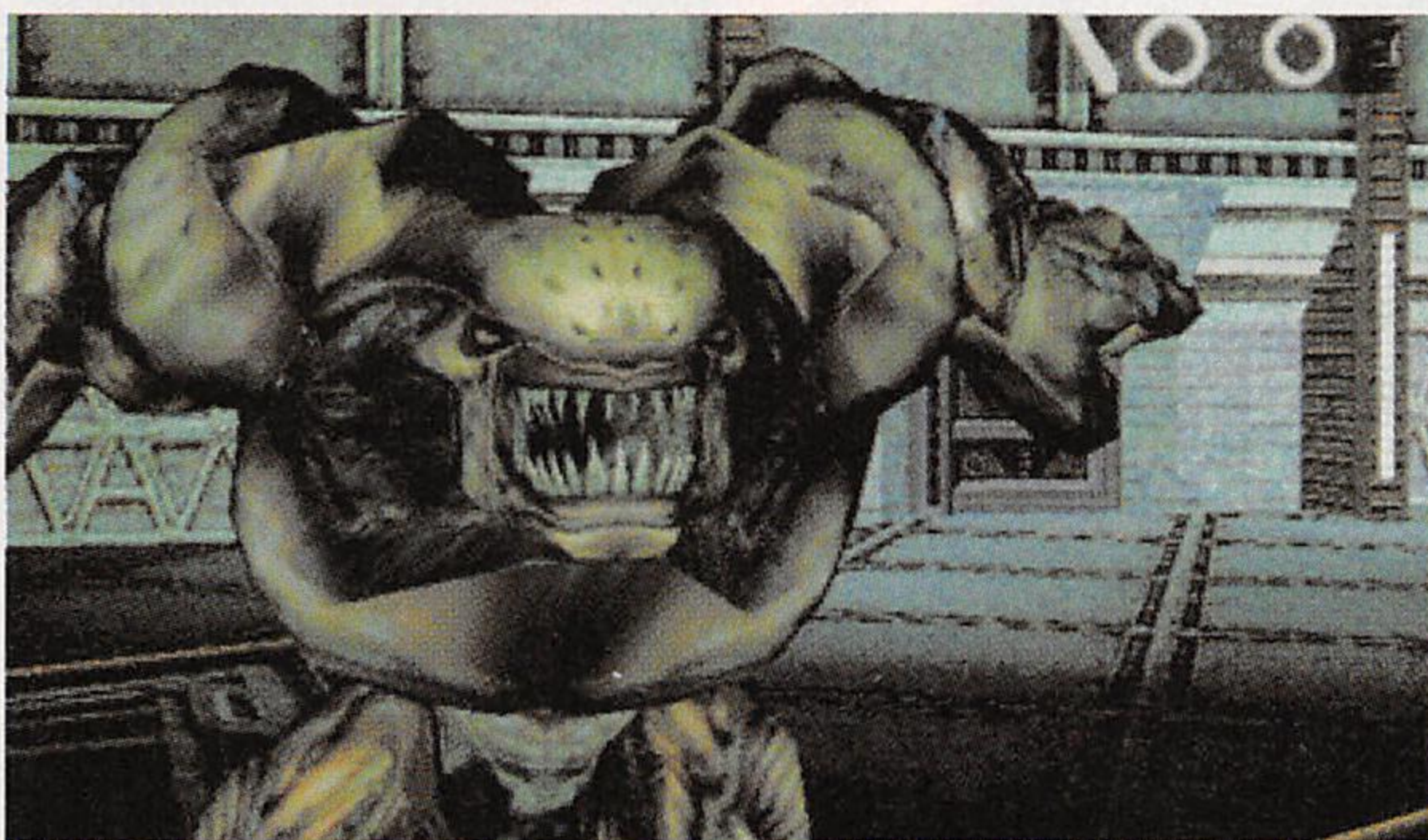


▲ These guys just love to pop out of dark corners and make you jump.

one of the scariest games you'll ever play? It's much too early to tell, right now. However, just looking at these screenshots is

enough to give most people nightmares. And if that isn't a good sign, we don't know what is.

► Stephen Frost

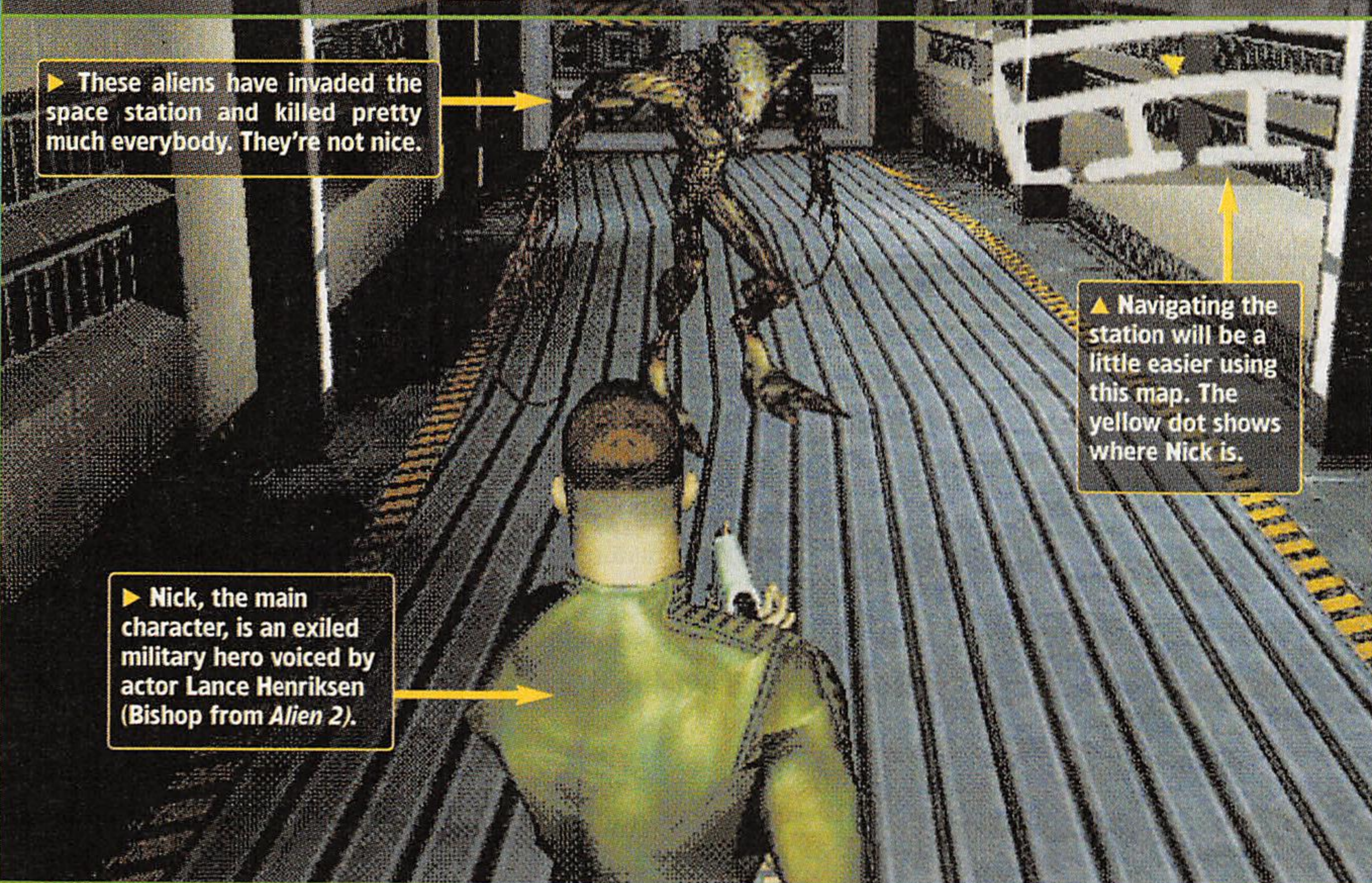


▲ The developers of *Run Like Hell* have promised that there'll be lots of alien butt-kicking going on. It'll make the movie *Aliens* seem tame in comparison.

"Imagine *Aliens* meets *The Thing*, but even more terrifying. This is going to be one of those games that even Jill Valentine would be afraid of"

PSM BREAKDOWN

An up-close look at the game in action



► These aliens have invaded the space station and killed pretty much everybody. They're not nice.

▲ Navigating the station will be a little easier using this map. The yellow dot shows where Nick is.

► Nick, the main character, is an exiled military hero voiced by actor Lance Henriksen (Bishop from *Alien 2*).

In This League,
You're Always Caught
Between A Rock
And A Hard Place.



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PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	RELEASE DATE	TYPE	# OF PLAYERS	ESRB RATING
SIERRA	GEARBOX STUDIOS	Q3	FIRST PERSON SHOOTER	1-2	MATURE

PS2

PERCENT COMPLETE

60%



▲ All the characters have benefited greatly from the power of the PS2. Little details, like sidepacks and helmets, have been added to provide greater realism.

HALF-LIFE

The PC blockbuster gets a major PS2 facelift

Unless you've been in outer space for the past few years, you should have heard of *Half-Life* in some form or another. It was only one of the most popular PC titles of all time and spawned several imitators and countless add-on packs. Now, the

game is finally making its way onto Sony's little black box, but not before a major facelift.

Half-Life follows the rather interesting and often bizarre adventure of one Gordon Freeman, a scientist at the Black Mesa Research Facility. After a scientific experiment goes horribly wrong, Gordon tries to make his way through the incredibly large facility and find a way out. Along the journey, he'll come across a myriad of disturbing aliens and backstabbing humans. And it's going to require all the weapons and items he can find in order to make it out alive.

The developers at Gearbox Studios have been working hard since last April (when they got their development kits)

trying to make sure that the PS2 version of *Half-Life* will better the PC game in every way possible. Obviously, all the story, drama and action in the original game will be brought over and refined a bit more, but that's not all. Everything from the lighting system to the actual characters, themselves, has been enhanced.

Just by looking at these screenshots, it's easy to see that the backgrounds look much cleaner and feature more details. The fire and explosion effects also look more realistic, thanks to a well-designed particle system. And if the package wasn't sweet enough, there's also several cooperative modes and bonus features that weren't on the PC version.

SCARY MONSTERS!

Aliens come in all shapes and sizes, like these monstrosities. All I can say is that Gordon better get a more powerful weapon.

▲ To say the aliens are disturbing could be the understatement of the year. These things are butt-ugly. Sure hope you know how to use that weapon...

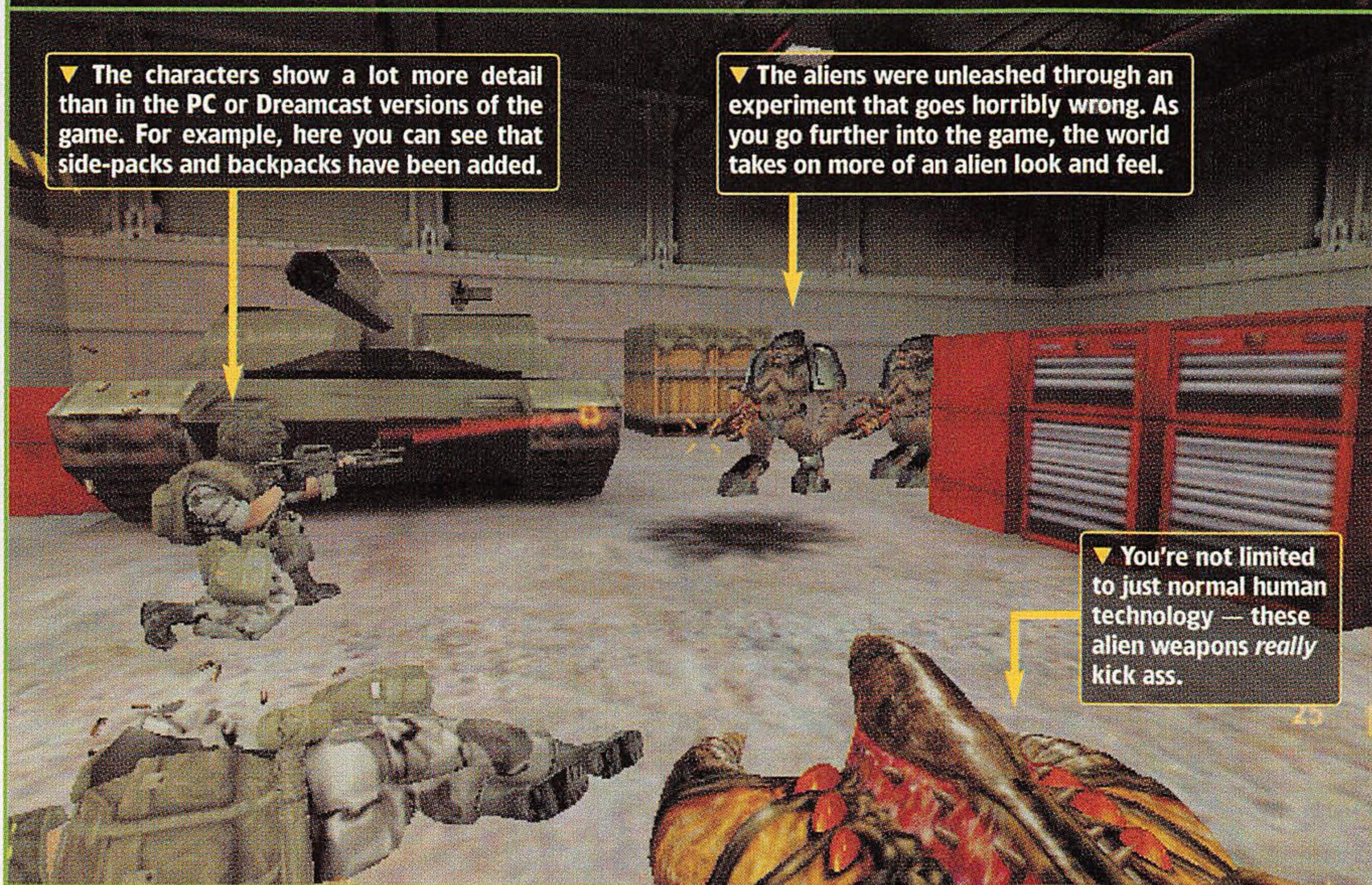
PSM BREAKDOWN

An up-close look at the game in action

▼ The characters show a lot more detail than in the PC or Dreamcast versions of the game. For example, here you can see that side-packs and backpacks have been added.

▼ The aliens were unleashed through an experiment that goes horribly wrong. As you go further into the game, the world takes on more of an alien look and feel.

▼ You're not limited to just normal human technology — these alien weapons really kick ass.



"Just by looking at these new screenshots, it's easy to see that the backgrounds look much cleaner and feature more details than in earlier versions"

Considering what big fans of *Half-Life* we are, we can't wait to see what other new additions and features the developers are planning to add. Obviously, there will be several other first-person shooters available before its

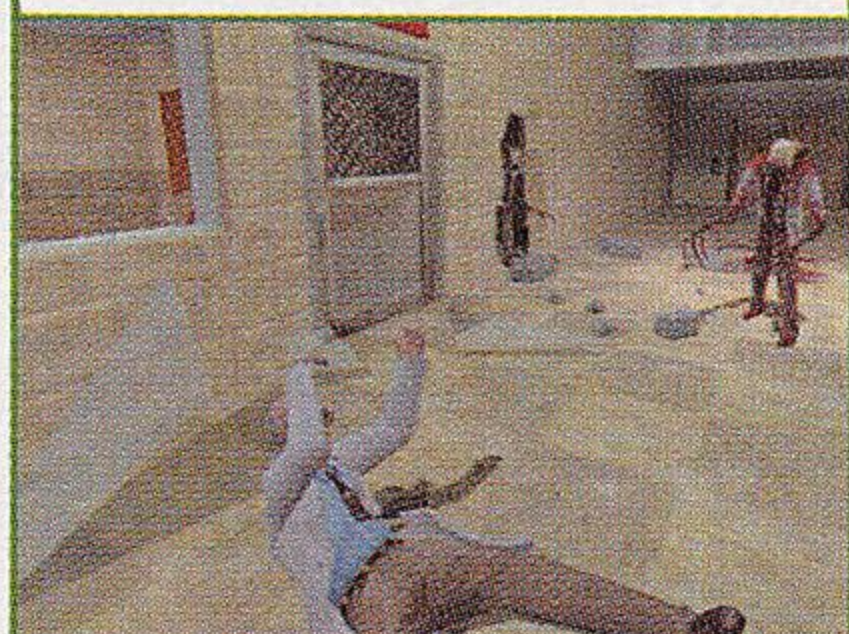
release, but *Half-Life* will probably be one of the first to truly provide both a compelling single-player

experience, along with a very strong multiplayer component. The challenge now is if Gearbox can get the game running at a solid 60fps. If it can, then it's easily got the leg up on the rest of its competition.

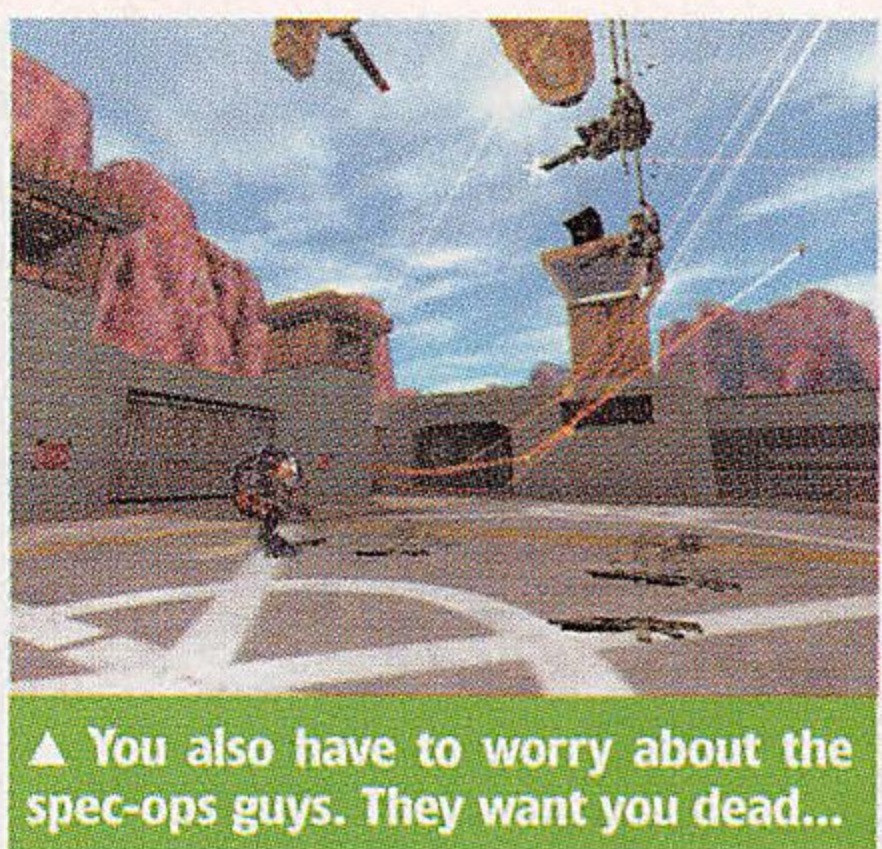
► Stephen Frost

IT'S IN THE DETAILS

It's amazing how much better this looks than the PC version. Just check out the detail!



▲▼ Scripted events, like scientists flying through windows, occur often and heighten the suspense level.



▲ You also have to worry about the spec-ops guys. They want you dead...

the BUZZ

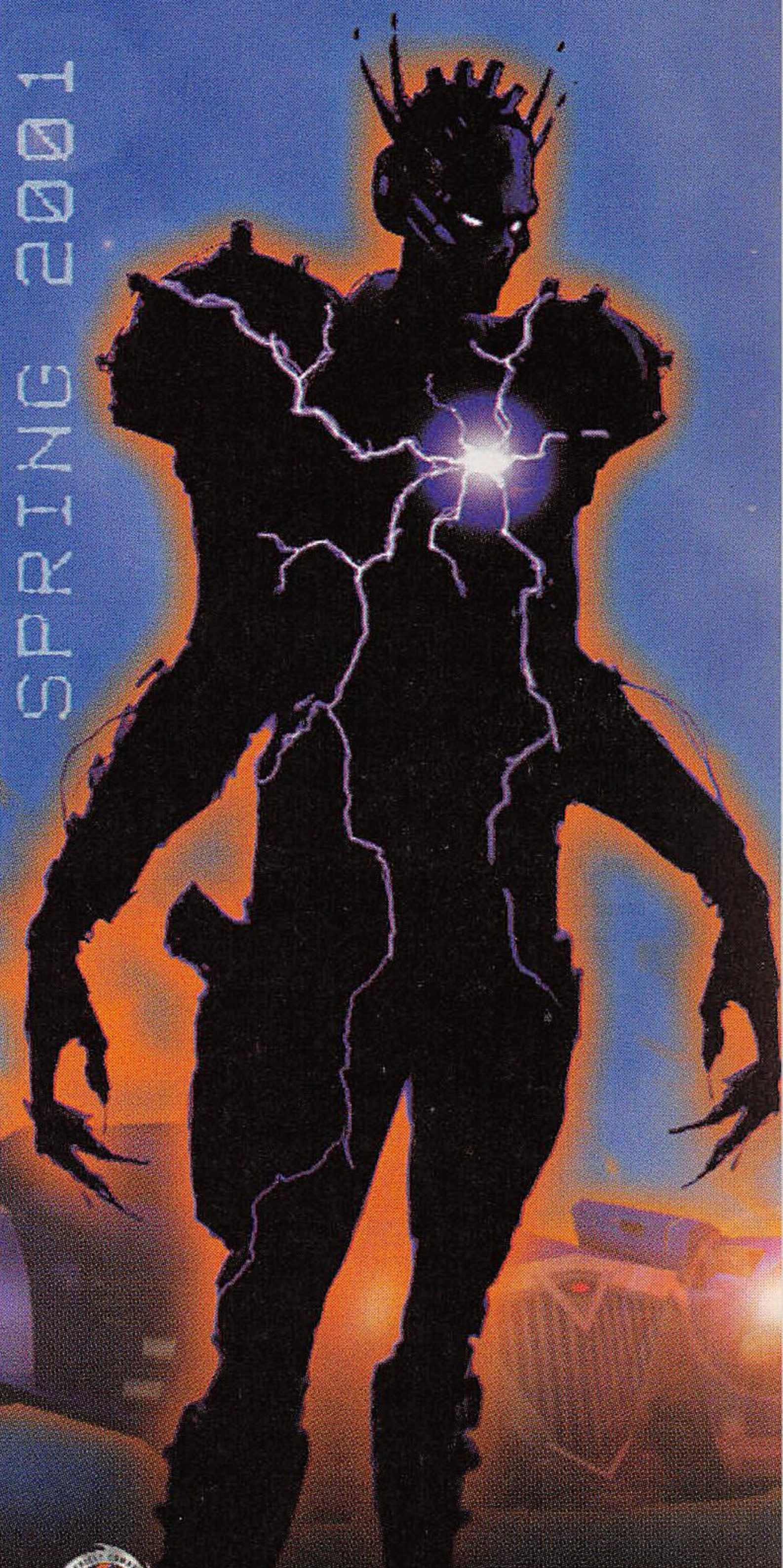
By bringing this most beautiful of First Person Shooters to the PS2, Sierra has done gamers a big favor.



▲ Sometimes other characters will join you and help you fight the alien intruders. Having someone watch your back is a godsend in this game.

In This League,
Being Heartless
Is An Advantage.

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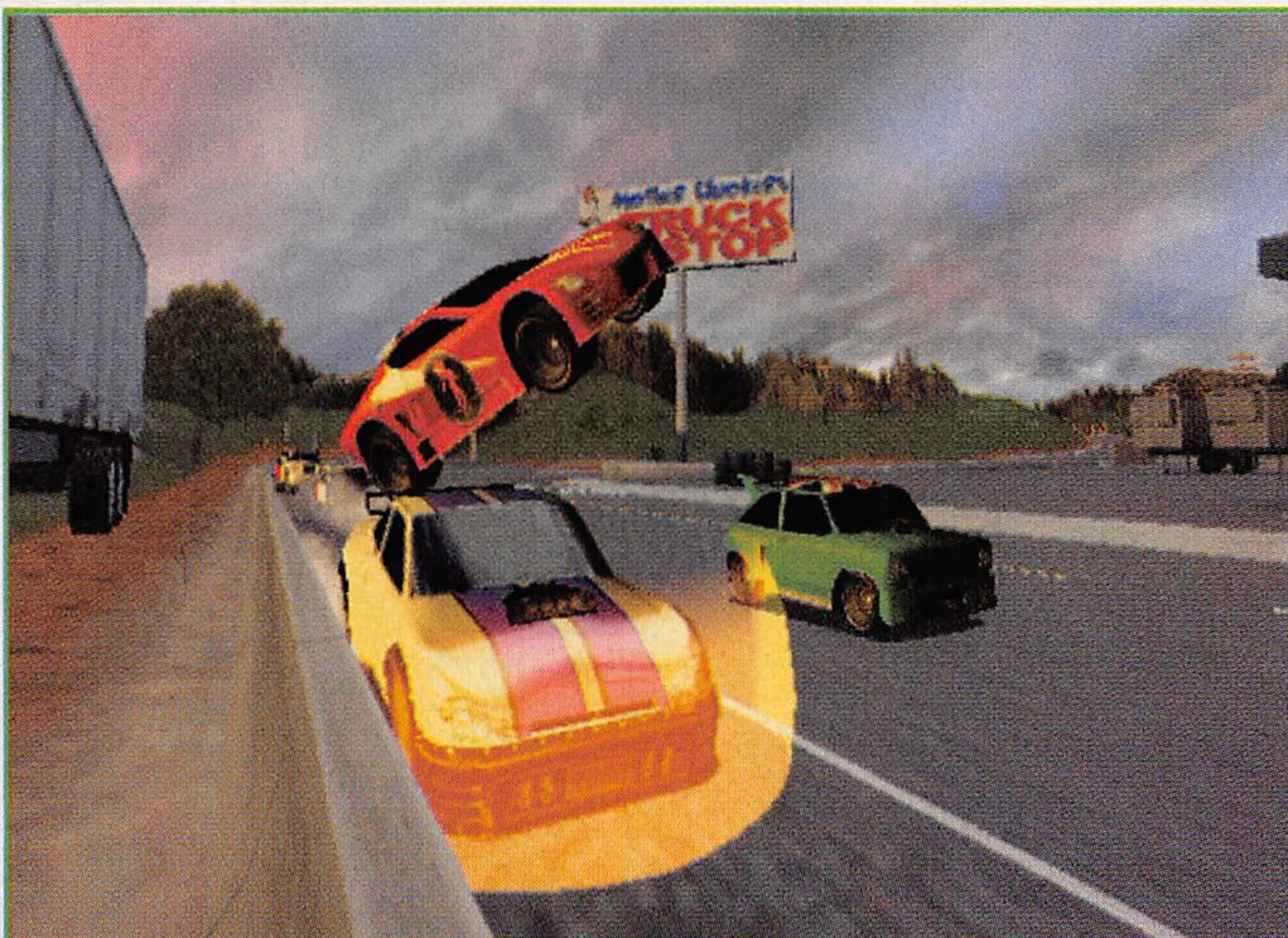


PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	RELEASE DATE	TYPE	# OF PLAYERS	ESRB RATING
EA GAMES	EA GAMES	SUMMER	FIGHTING	1-2	EVERYONE

PS2

PERCENT COMPLETE

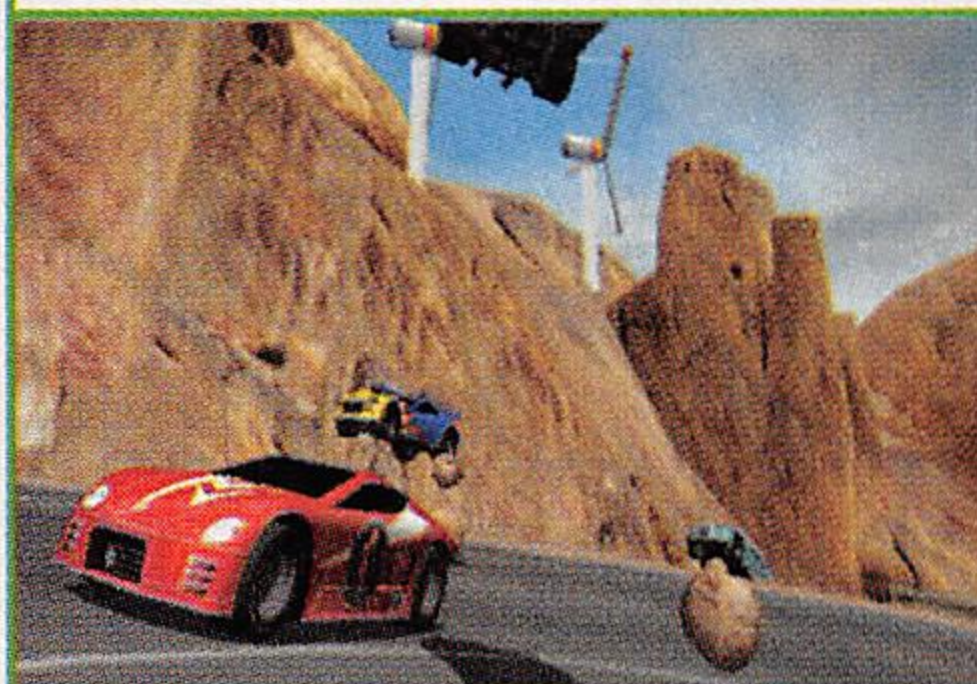
70%



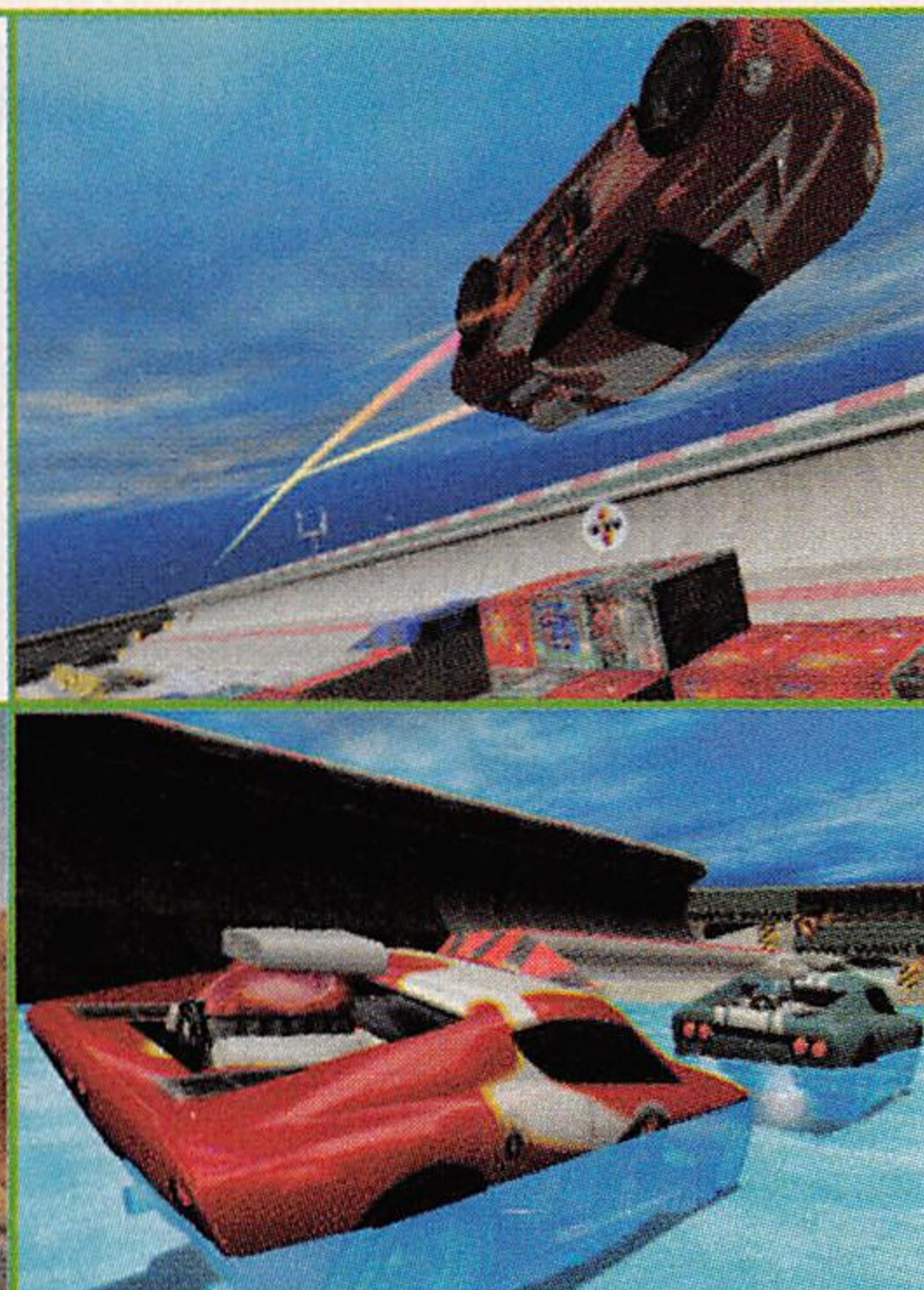
▲ You can grab a power-up that'll turn your car into an energy-shielded ramming machine!

IT'S CRAZY, MAN!

There's all sorts of outrageous stuff going on in this game. You can even drive while your car's partially submerged or do corkscrew barrel rolls through the sky! Amazing!



▲ Falling boulders, corkscrew jumps, and underwater driving? This is extreme racing!



RUMBLE RACING

EA revs up an outrageous muscle car racer

The unofficial sequel to EA's excellent arcade racer *NASCAR Rumble* won't be holding onto the pro racing license, but it promises to deliver the same outrageous car design, courses, and, most of all, power-ups when it hits PS2 this summer.

Promising a cross between the high-speed arcade racing of *Ridge Racer* and the seat-of-your-pants stunts of *San Francisco Rush*, the game will put players behind the wheel of various muscle and sports cars, not to mention some truly outlandish rides, such as a rocket car or supercharged mini-van. 15 courses are planned, ranging from city streets to sea-side runs, and will include three stunt courses on which to test your mettle.

The most impressive aspect of the game thus far is its power-ups, which range from basic bombs and nitro boosts to an actual tornado that is one of the coolest-looking effects we've

seen on PS2 to date. It's not just a whirlwind moving down the track — this thing turns the sky dark, is absolutely gigantic, and destroys everything in its wake.

EA's also planning several multi-

player modes, including a stunt challenge. This is certainly a game that arcade racing fans will want to keep a close eye on. We'll hopefully have a hands-on preview soon, so sit tight.

► Randy Nelson

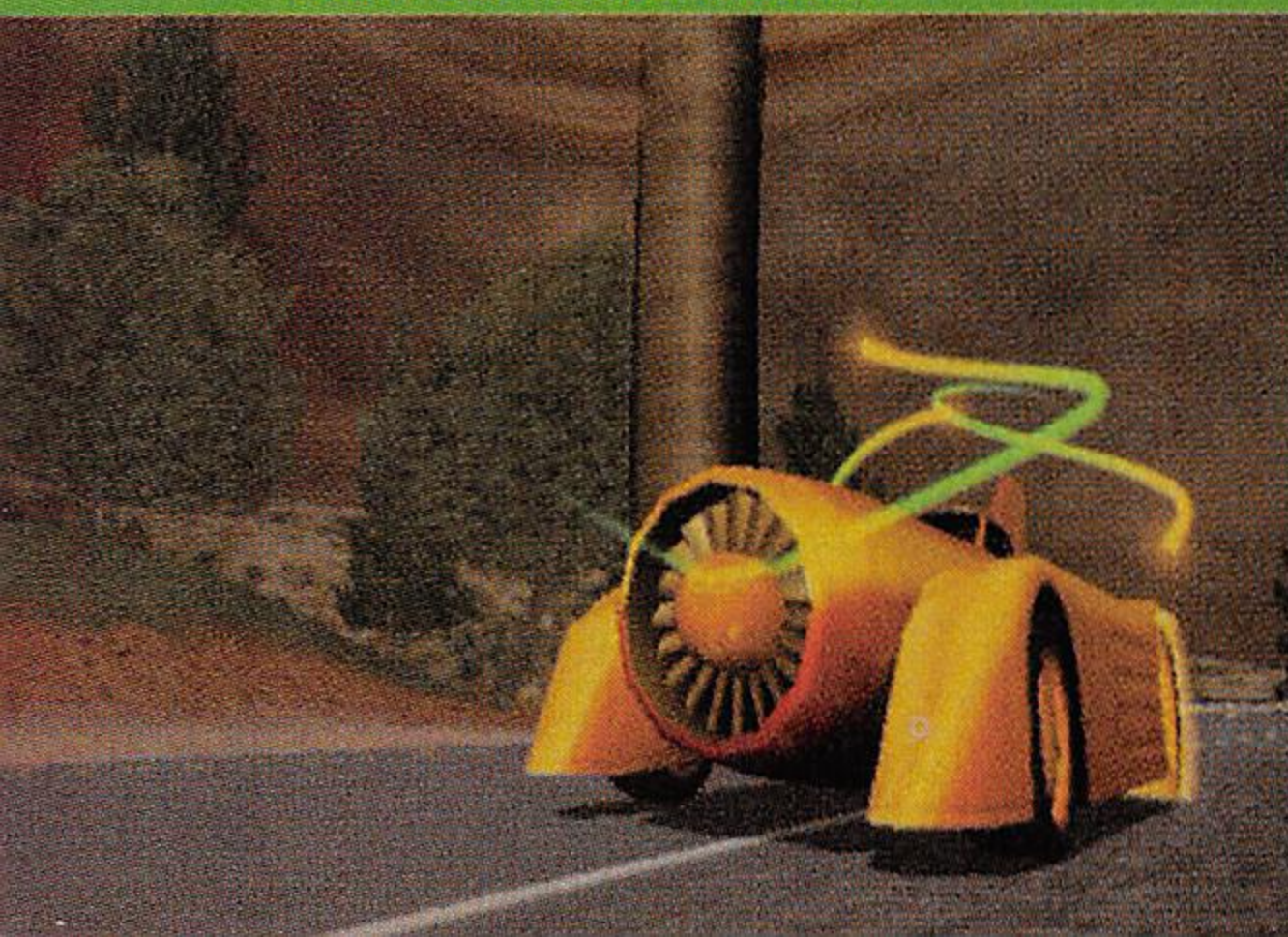
The BUZZ

This could be the next big arcade racer to hit PS2. Keep those fingers crossed and keep your eyes peeled for tornadoes!

▼ The cars look pretty cartoony, but they're super detailed. You can even see engine parts, like the drive belt on the blower assembly, moving. Check out that paint job!



▼ When the tornado power-up is released, all heck breaks loose on-screen.





The Quickest Way To A Giant's Heart...



PlayStation 2

PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	RELEASE DATE	TYPE	# OF PLAYERS	ESRB RATING
ACCLAIM	CLOCKWORK GAMES	FEBRUARY	RACING	1-8	EVERYONE

PS

PERCENT COMPLETE

95%



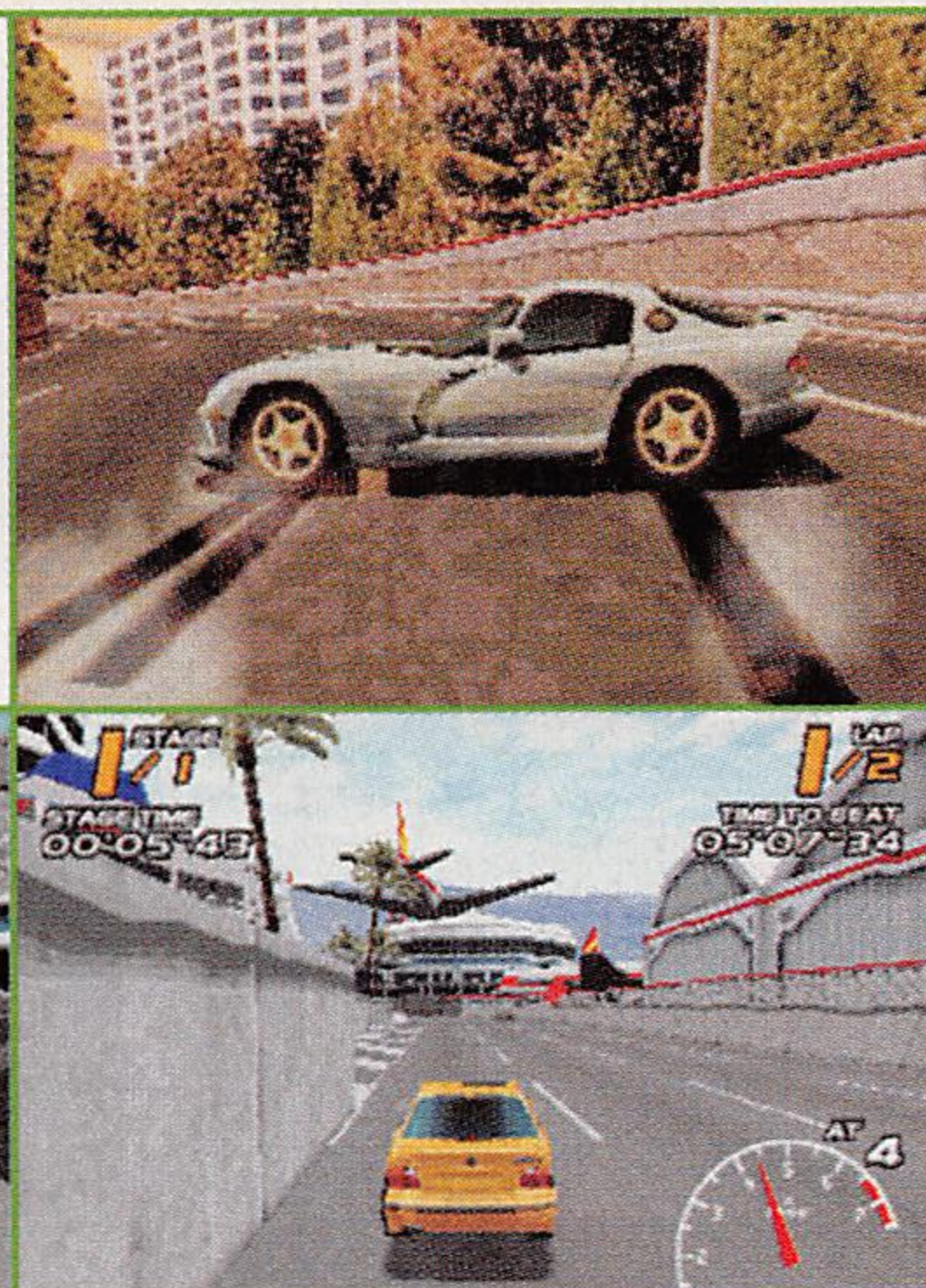
▲ Breaking balloons and other challenges in the Stunt Mode will hone your skills.

I CAN SEE FOR MILES AND MILES

The graphics engine ensures that there's absolutely no pop-in, even while rendering multiple vehicles and background animations.



▲ No matter where the action takes place, there's never a shred of pop-in.



VANISHING POINT

Long-delayed racer sees light at the end of the tunnel

Vanishing Point's exhaustive design offers stunt-based driving and arcade racing with a slew of licensed cars, backed by an 18-month research period headed by automotive engineers and physicists. While ambition has pushed back the release date by nine or ten months now, the pursuit of quality can often strike pay dirt. Look at *Gran Turismo*.

VP derives its name partly from the fact that the engine renders objects from the vanishing point to the foreground without any pop-in. The particle generation system also renders smoke, skids, sparks and dynamic lighting in real time. Throw in the large number of cars the engine can maintain on-screen, and animations for planes, trains, hot-air balloons and other things in the background, without sacrificing the slick framerate, and the racing experience is refreshing.

Loads of unlockable foreign and domestic cars (more than 30 in all),

tracks, stunts and movies reward your performance in a solid mix of game modes. VP boasts an Arcade mode (which includes tournament, single race, time trial, stunt driver and CWG rally modes), Head 2 Head mode, and

a Multiplayer mode, as well as a Tune Up Shop that lets you customize 12 different car attributes. Clockwork will be tweaking and tuning finer issues until VP hits the market in February.

► Tommy Layton

the BUZZ

Clockwork's racer features a full slate of licensed cars, a capable rendering engine, and a unique stunt mode.

▼ You'll be treated to some action-packed FMVs.



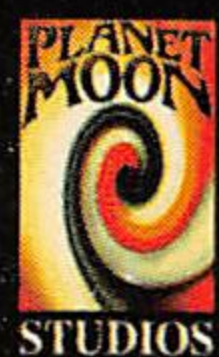
▲ This Audi is one of more than 30 licensed vehicles you can take liberties with.

...Is Through His Stomach!

GIANTS CITIZEN KABUTO

TM

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PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	RELEASE DATE	TYPE	# OF PLAYERS	ESRB RATING
INTERPLAY	DIGITAL MAYHEM	SUMMER	ACTION/STRATEGY	1	TBD

PS2

PERCENT COMPLETE

50%



▲ The graphics might not look that great now, but the finished game will look better than the PC version.

GIANTS: CITIZEN KABUTO

An early look at Interplay's PC monster hit on PS2

0 riginally released on the PC, *Giants* is now stomping its way onto the PS2 and in

a big way. For those who aren't familiar with the title, the game is basically a

third-person shooter with several strategy and base-building elements thrown into the mix.

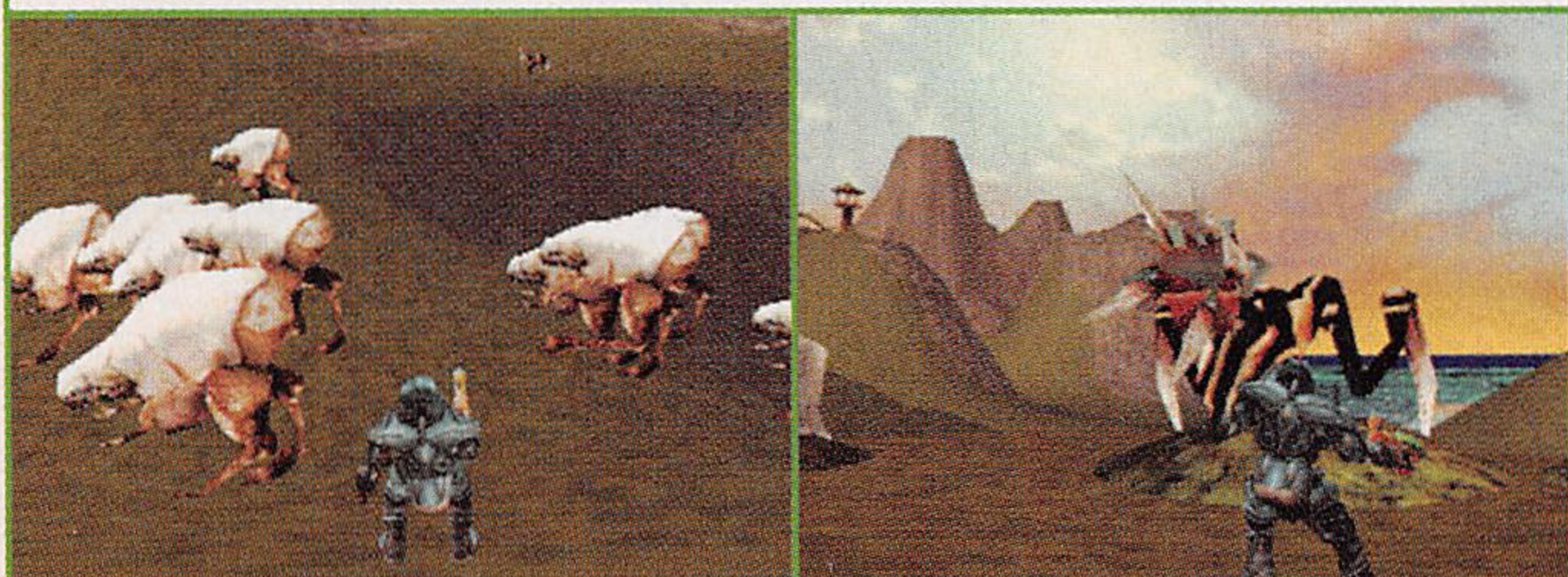
Over the course of 45 missions, players will take on the role of three

different races of creatures, all with very unique abilities and gameplay mechanics. The technology-based Meccaryns rely on jetpacks and other sci-fi devices, while the ocean-dwelling Sea Reapers use more traditional weapons and spells. The last of the three races is a giant named Kabuto. Lonely and frustrated with life, Kabuto lashes out at everything that he happens upon.

From the visual side of things, *Giants* should easily eclipse most of the next-generation games that have come before it. The developers are working hard to take advantage of the PS2's power and will include several enhancements that gamers should appreciate. The characters and back-

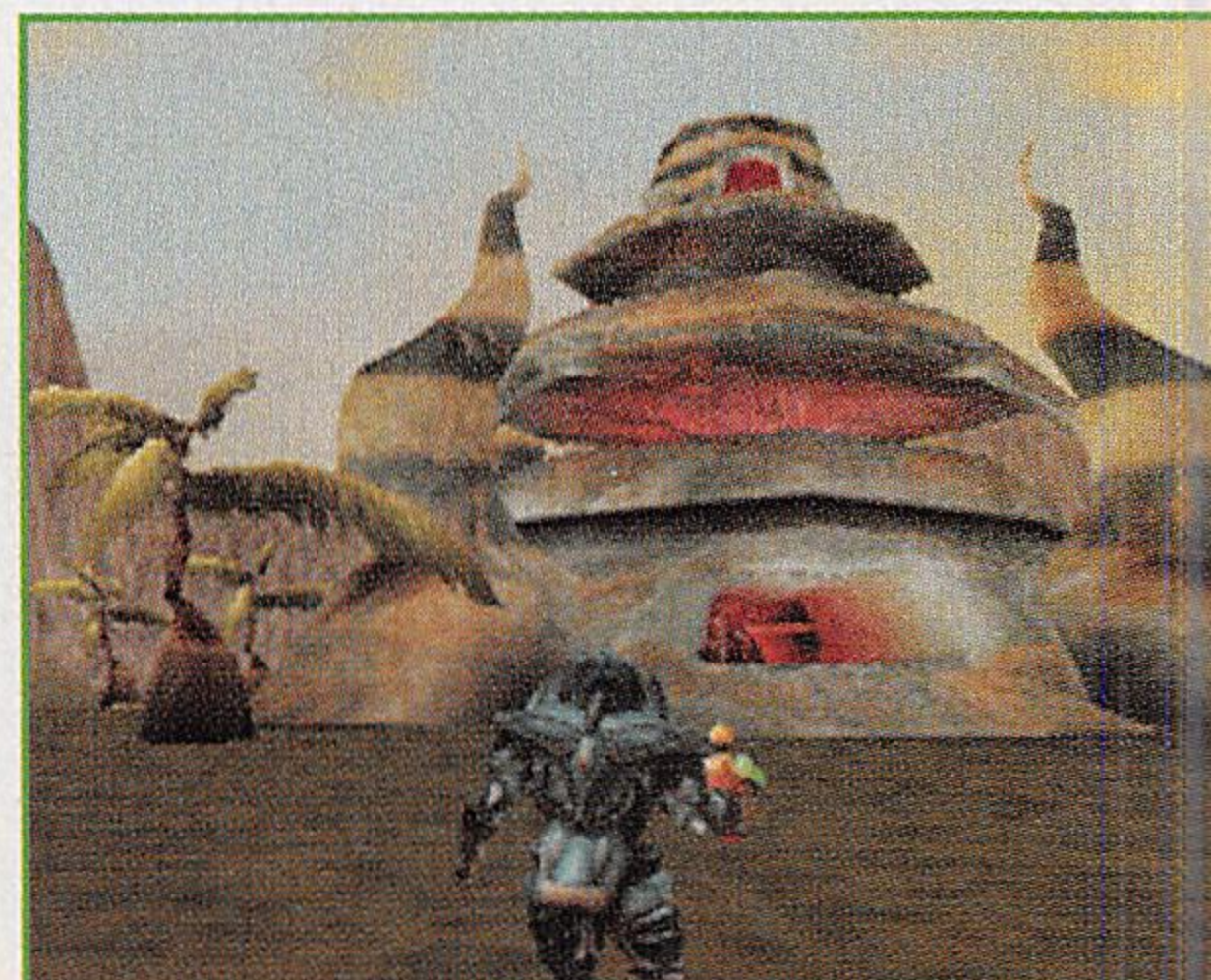
STRANGE INHABITANTS

The great thing about *Giants* is that you never quite know what or who you're going to run into. It's best to always be prepared, though.



▲ Innocent? Nah, they'll run you over.

▲ This guy looks like some serious trouble.



▲ One of the game's strategies is learning to build your own base.

grounds will sport a larger number of polygons, allowing for far greater detail and realism. Also, a refined lighting and particle systems will provide the flashiness that us gamers love.

PSM BREAKDOWN

An up-close look at the game in action

▼ The final version of the game will showcase some amazing-looking environment graphics. The water will have five layers of transparency, which will give it a much better look than in the PC version.

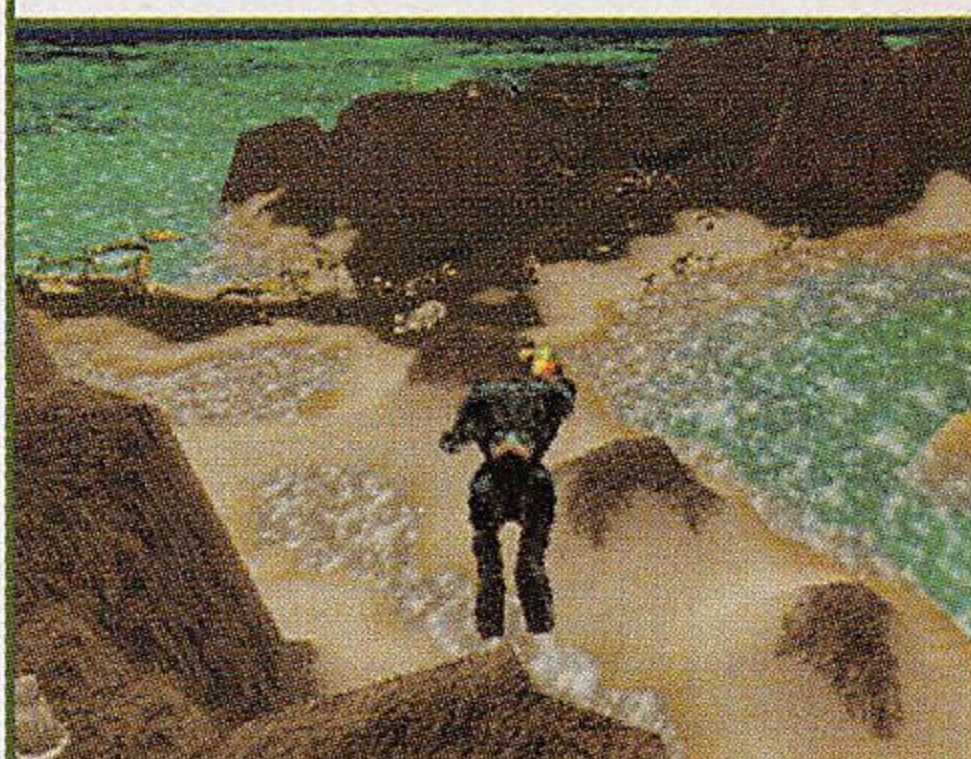
■ Although the PC got *Giants* first, the PlayStation 2 should end up getting the ultimate version of the game, thanks to enhancements like improved graphics.

◀ You'll get to play as three different character races; this one's a Meccaryn, a race that's devoted to technology.



THE BENEFITS OF SCIENCE

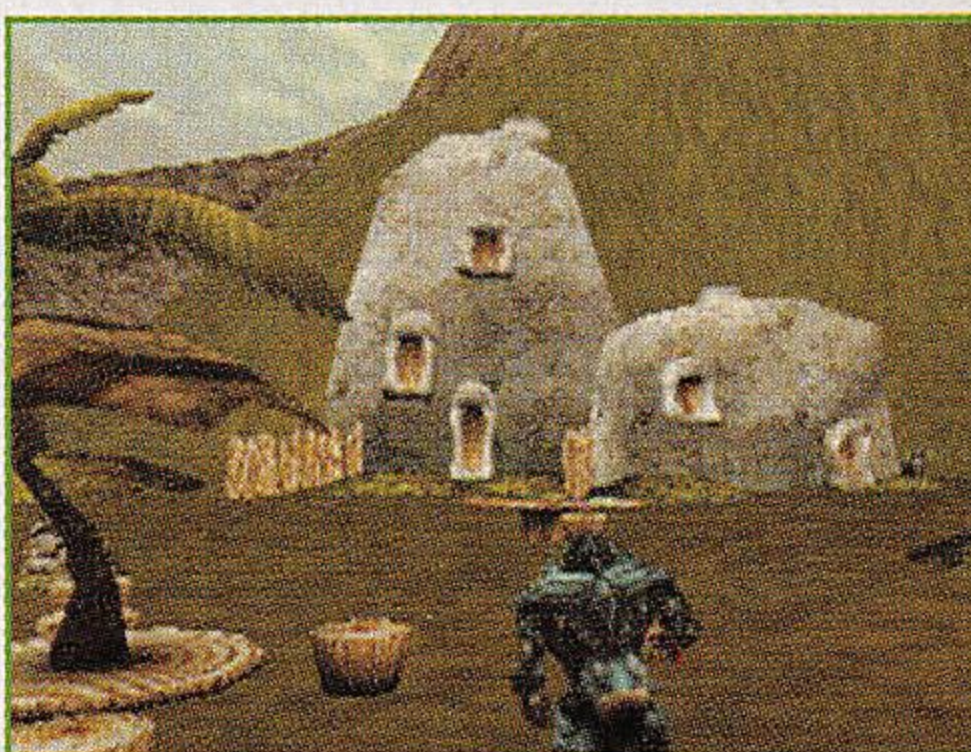
The advanced Meccaryns have based their society solely on science and technology.



▲ Use your jetpack to fly over mountains and long distances.



▲ The raygun is good against most creatures... but what about Kabuto?



▲ The world of Kabuto contains many unique buildings and dwellings.

"It may not look like it just yet, but we have a very strong feeling that *Giants* could very well eat up its competition when it hits this summer"

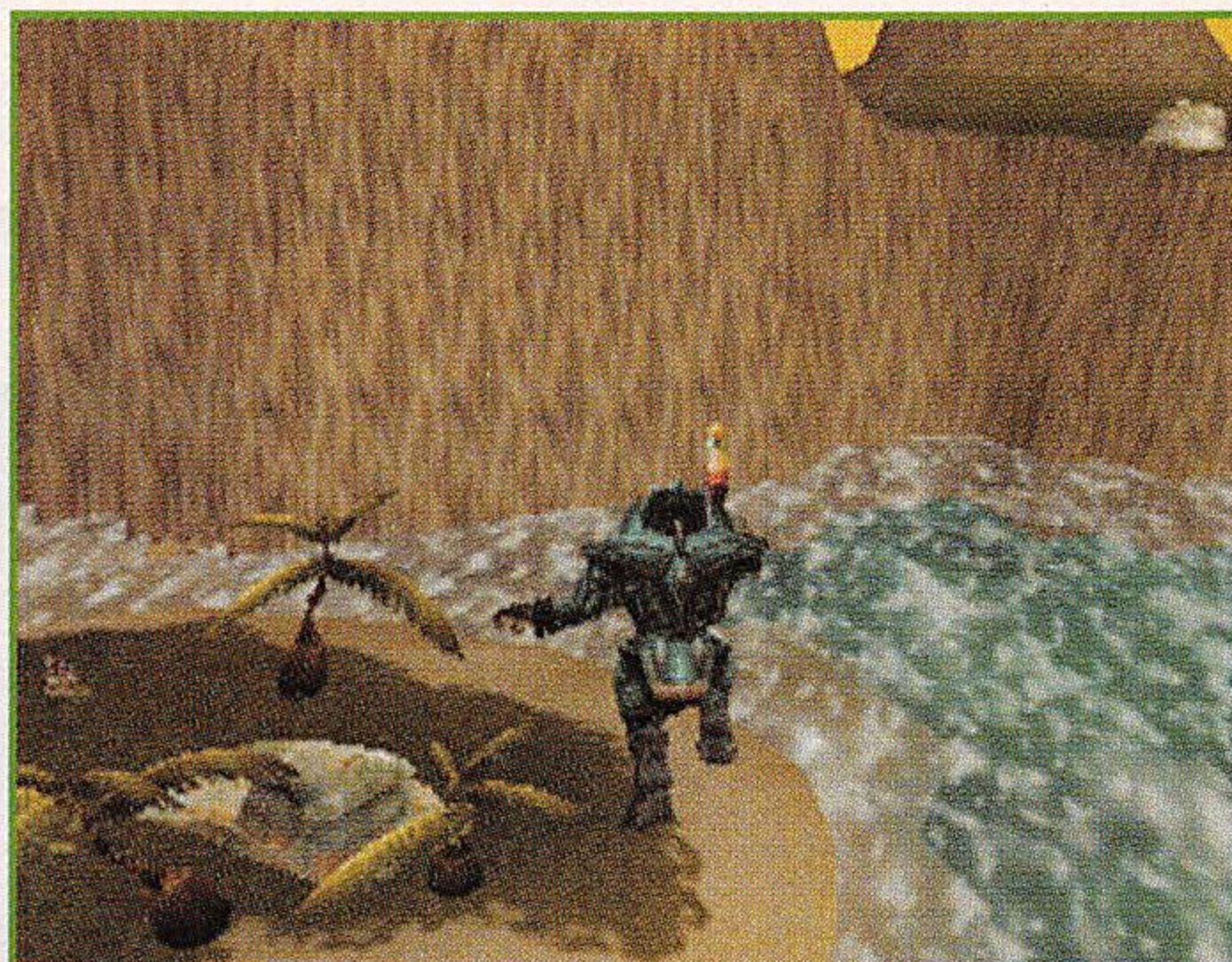
It should be noted, however, that screenshots in this preview were taken from a very early version of the game. All you see here is PC code running on a PS2 development kit. None of the effects or additional graphical polish have been added yet. The resolution also seems quite low right now, but that's obviously going to change shortly.

The main challenge for Digital Mayhem, however, won't be the graphics; it's going to be the control system. Since *Giants* had its roots on the PC, it could be quite difficult to convert the standard keyboard/mouse setup over to the DualShock 2. The developers don't seem concerned, though, and have promised us that the controls will be very intuitive and easy to understand. They've

even added features such as auto-aiming in order to help out the more novice players.

With that sort of attitude behind it, we can only assume that this game is going to end up being rather impressive. It may not look like it now, but we have a strong feeling that *Giants* could very well eat up the rest of its competition.

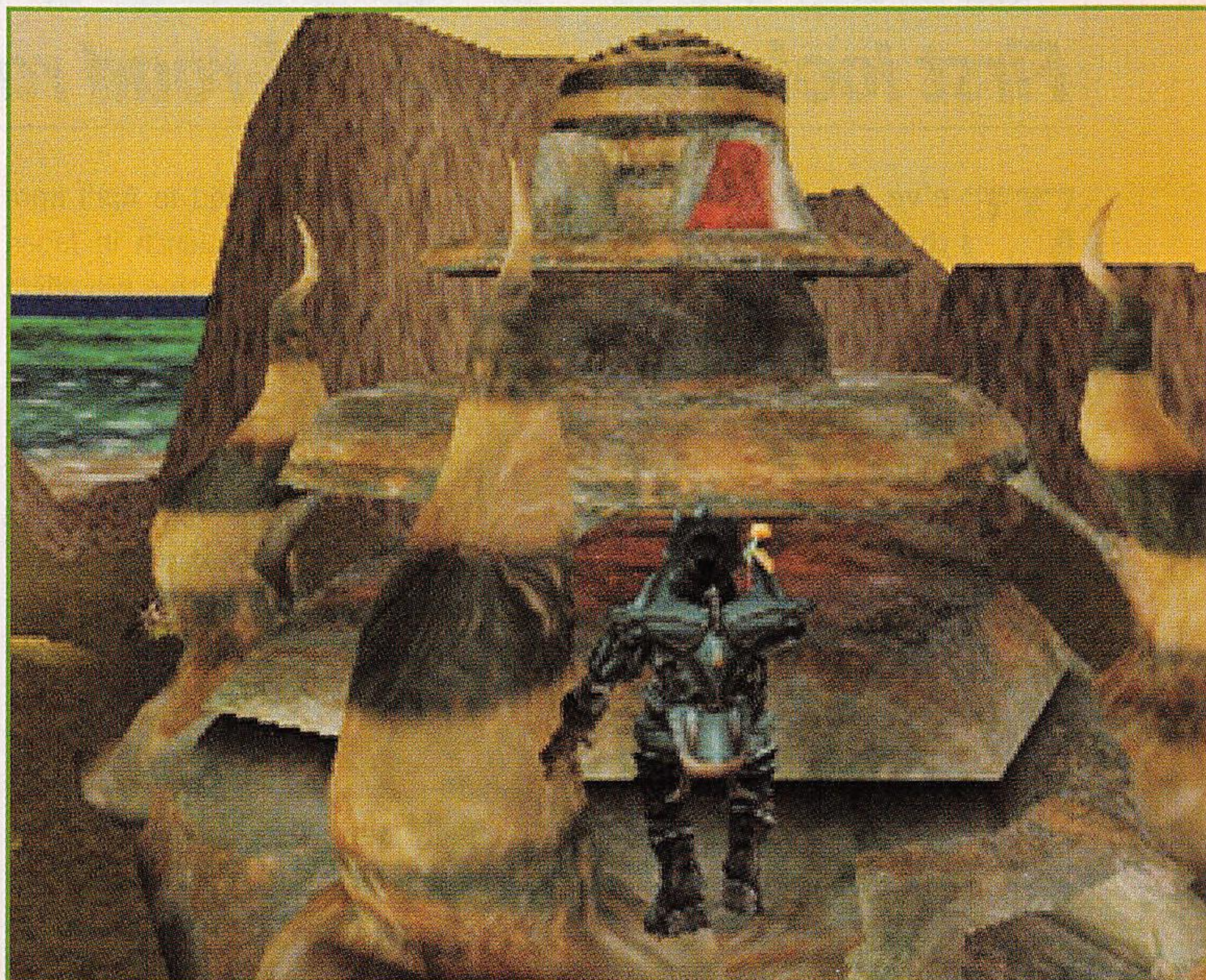
► **Stephen Frost**



▲ Right now, the water doesn't look that good, but it will on the PS2.

the BUZZ

Full of amazing visuals and fresh innovations, *Giants* should do extremely well on the PS2.



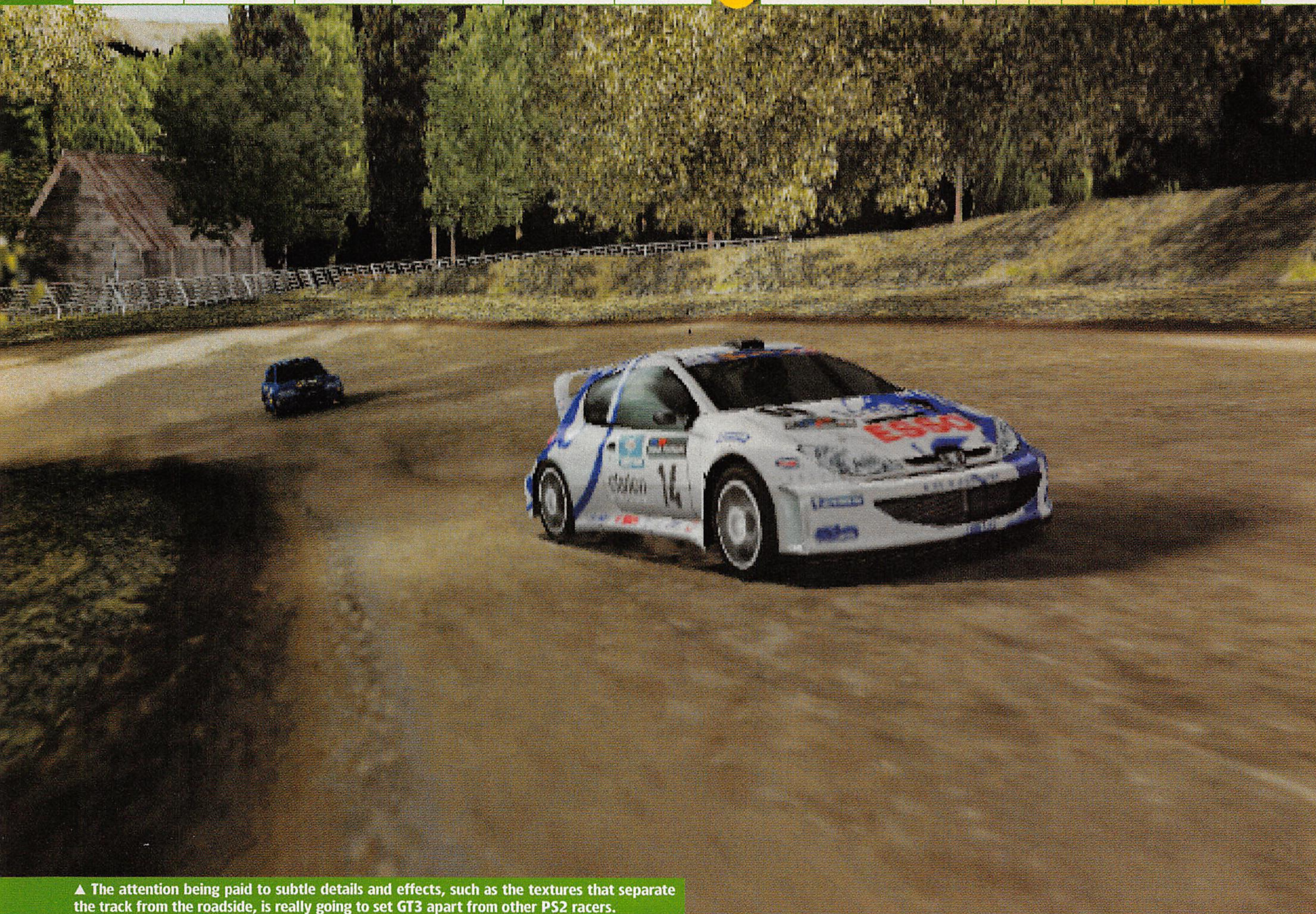
▲ The terrain can be quite formidable. Hope you've got your jetpack...

PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	RELEASE DATE	TYPE	# OF PLAYERS	ESRB RATING
SONY CEA	POLYPHONY DIGITAL	SPRING	RACING	1-6	EVERYONE

PS2

PERCENT COMPLETE

80%



▲ The attention being paid to subtle details and effects, such as the textures that separate the track from the roadside, is really going to set GT3 apart from other PS2 racers.

GRAN TURISMO 3

First look: Awesome off-road racing and weather effects!

We've been talking about the dirt course racing changes and new weather effects planned for *Gran Turismo 3* for a while now, and this month we got a hold of the first screens of Polyphony Digital's efforts in action. While the

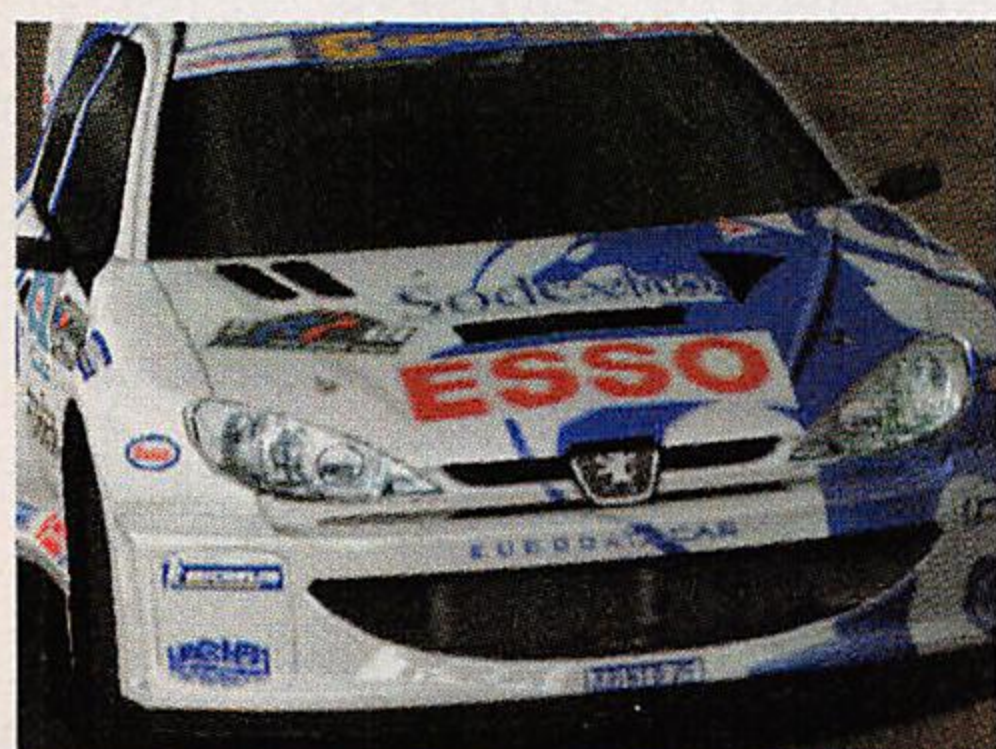
game has been delayed to April from its original February launch in Japan (Sony's not saying how that will affect the U.S. release), it's now looking more certain than ever that gamers will be in for one heck of a treat when the game finally lands on store shelves.

The real standout from this latest round of images would have to be the game's rain effects, which are easily the most realistic looking ever. And when combined with nighttime lighting effects, they make for an almost photo-realistic presentation. You can actually see water pooling on the uneven road surface, which realistically reflects car headlights and tail lights as they pass. Thanks to PS2's powerful particle effect tools, there's a convinc-

ing spray of mist kicked up by the cars as well. Even street lights are reflected in the water, and the cars' lights emit a soft natural glow. We can only imagine

how cool it'll look when the rain's actually coming down during the race.

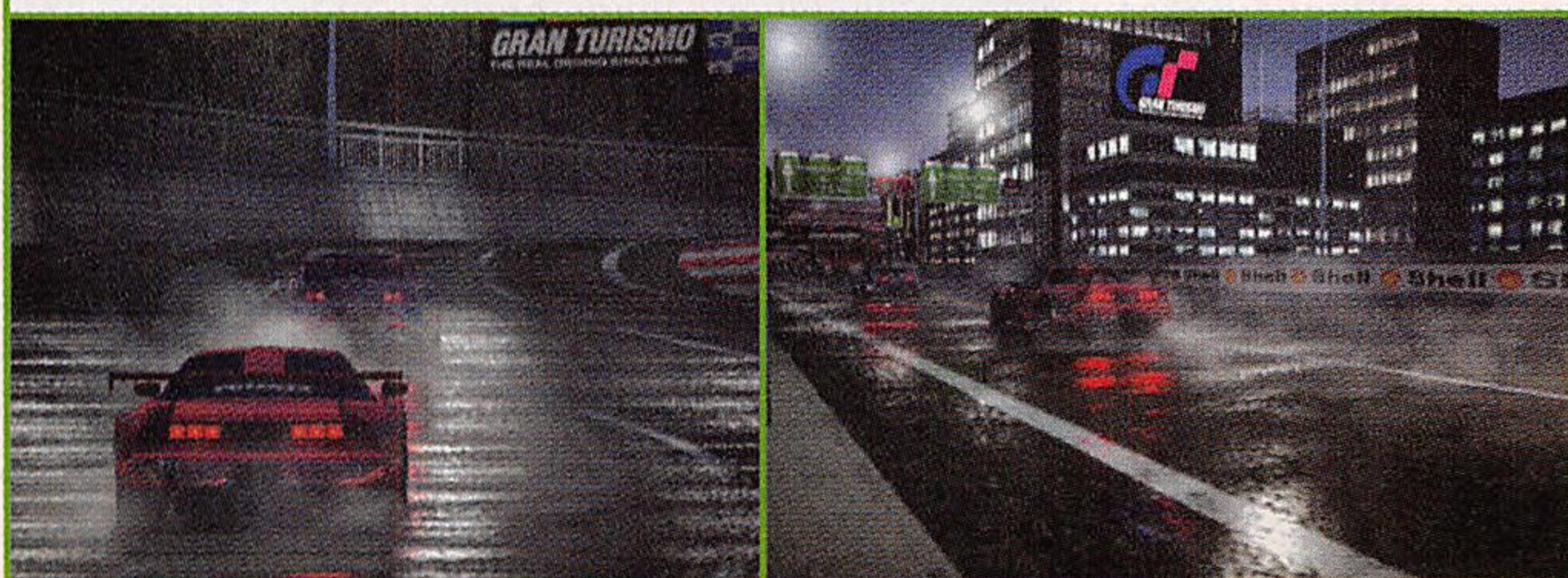
We talked about *GT3*'s revamped off-road racing last issue, and now you



▲ We don't know if the cars will get dirty, but it'd be in keeping with the detail level.

WET 'N' WILD RACING

Here it is: the much talked-about rain effect that's new to *GT3*. Does it look awesome or what?



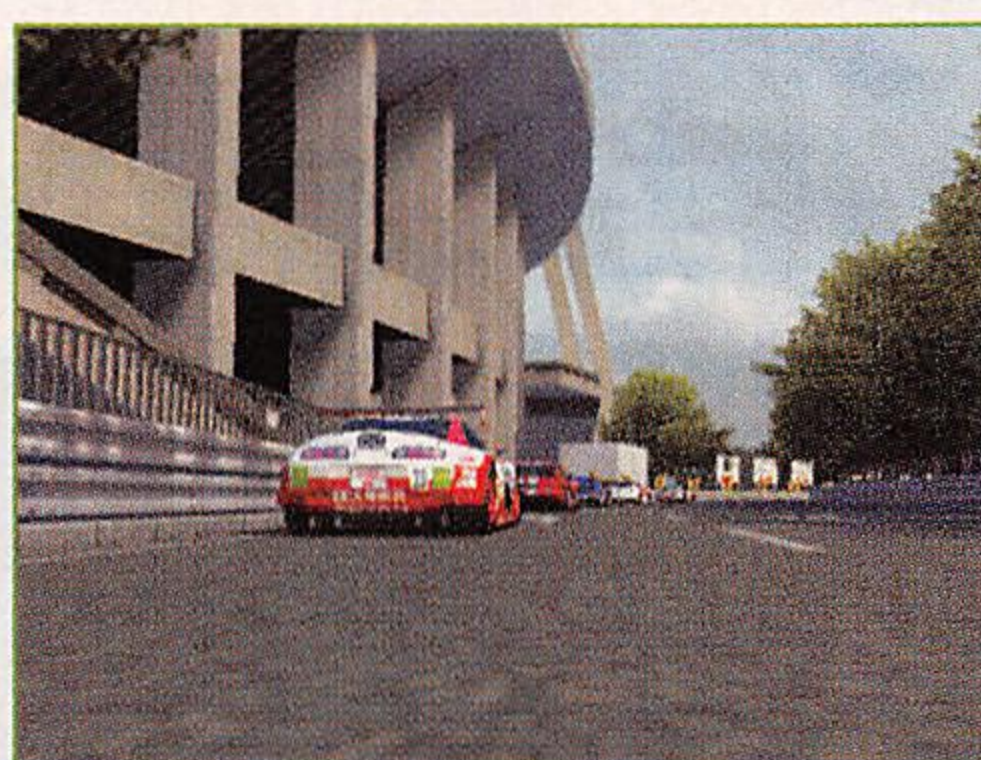
▲ Never before has a wet pavement effect been done so perfectly in a game.

can see it for yourself. Just think: as good as it looks in pictures, it looks 10 times better moving at an unwavering 60 frames per second. We don't know how Polyphony Digital is squeezing so much out of PS2 this early in its lifecycle, but we wish it'd share its secrets with other developers.

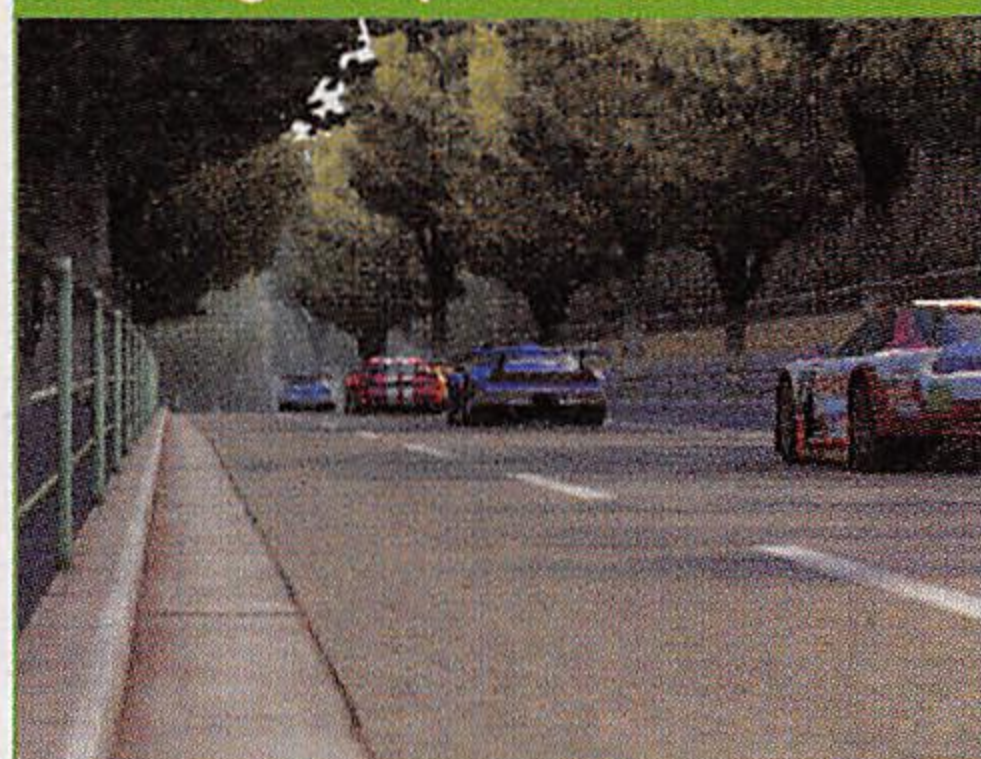
This batch of screens also provides the first glimpse of *GT3*'s new Tokyo street course, which just so happens to pass right by the Sony Computer Entertainment building. It actually looks a lot like the courses from *Ridge Racer V*, but with near second-generation graphics techniques being applied for impressive results. It's amazing when you think that the first games hit PS2 only a few months ago.

Given the current uncertainty about the game's U.S. release date, there's no word on when we'll get our hands on a review copy, but we can't wait to take the final version for a spin. We'll have a full review just as soon as possible.

► **Randy Nelson**



▲ During replays, you'll be able to switch between different car POVs by pressing the left analog stick up and down.



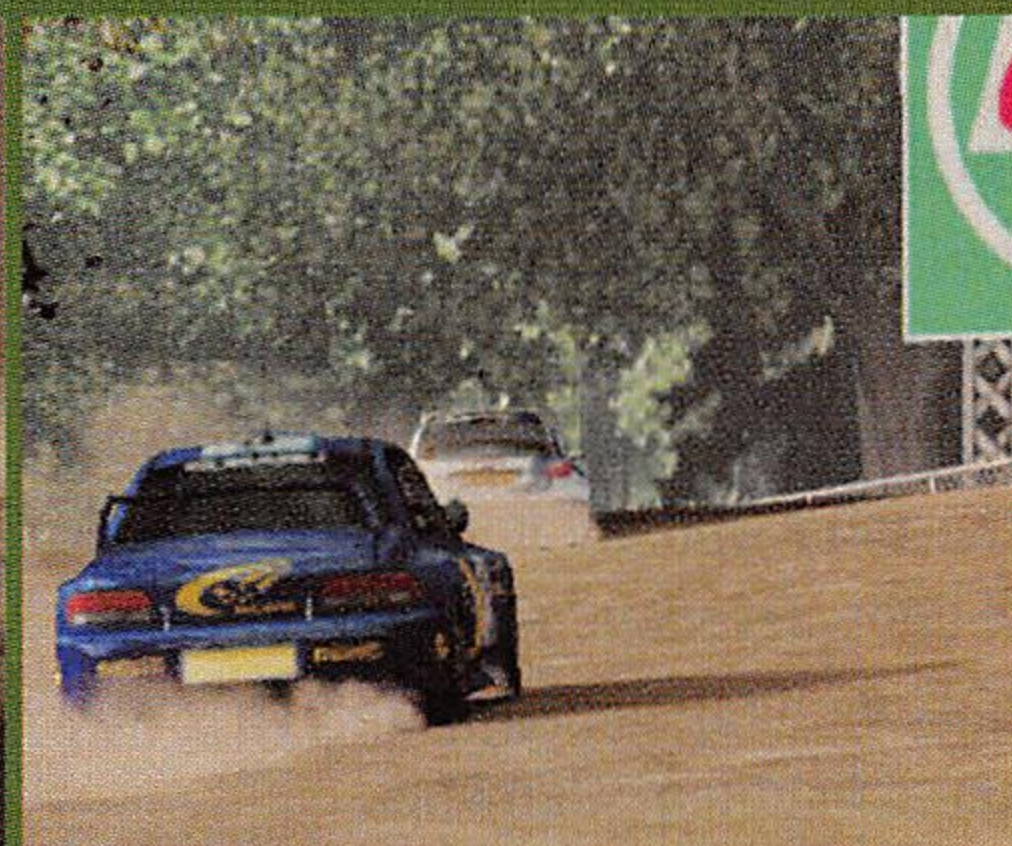
▲ Even when you get right up to objects (like this roadside railing), they don't fuzz out. Man, those graphics are sweet!

The BUZZ

It may have been delayed again, but if *GT3* keeps looking (and playing) this good, it'll be well worth the wait.

RALLY LOOKING GOOD

When we saw *GT3*'s off-road racing in action, our eyes almost popped right out of our heads. No foolin' — the lighting, trees, and dust effects make this part of the game nearly photo-realistic.



▲ If the finished dirt racing mode plays as good as it looks, we're in for a real treat.

"We don't know how Polyphony Digital is squeezing so much out of PS2... but we wish it'd share its secrets with other developers"

PSM BREAKDOWN

An up-close look at the game in action

► Many courses will have a nighttime variant, complete with different polygonal models (like these buildings with the windows lit up). Plus, the lighting effects are the best ever!

► Even the car's tail lights have a soft glow, the kind you'd get when there's moisture in the air. Now THAT'S detail!

◀ The road has an incredibly real texture, and looks amazing when wet! The water actually looks like it's gathering in the pits of the road.

LAND OF THE RACING SUN

GT3's Tokyo street course looks like something out of *Ridge Racer V*, only far more realistic. You'll even get to race by the Sony CEI building!



▲▲ How they're able to clear the streets of Tokyo for a road race is anyone's guess, but it sure does look promising.



PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	RELEASE DATE	TYPE	# OF PLAYERS	ESRB RATING
BETHESDA	MYTHOS	FALL	ACTION/STRATEGY	1	TBD

PS2

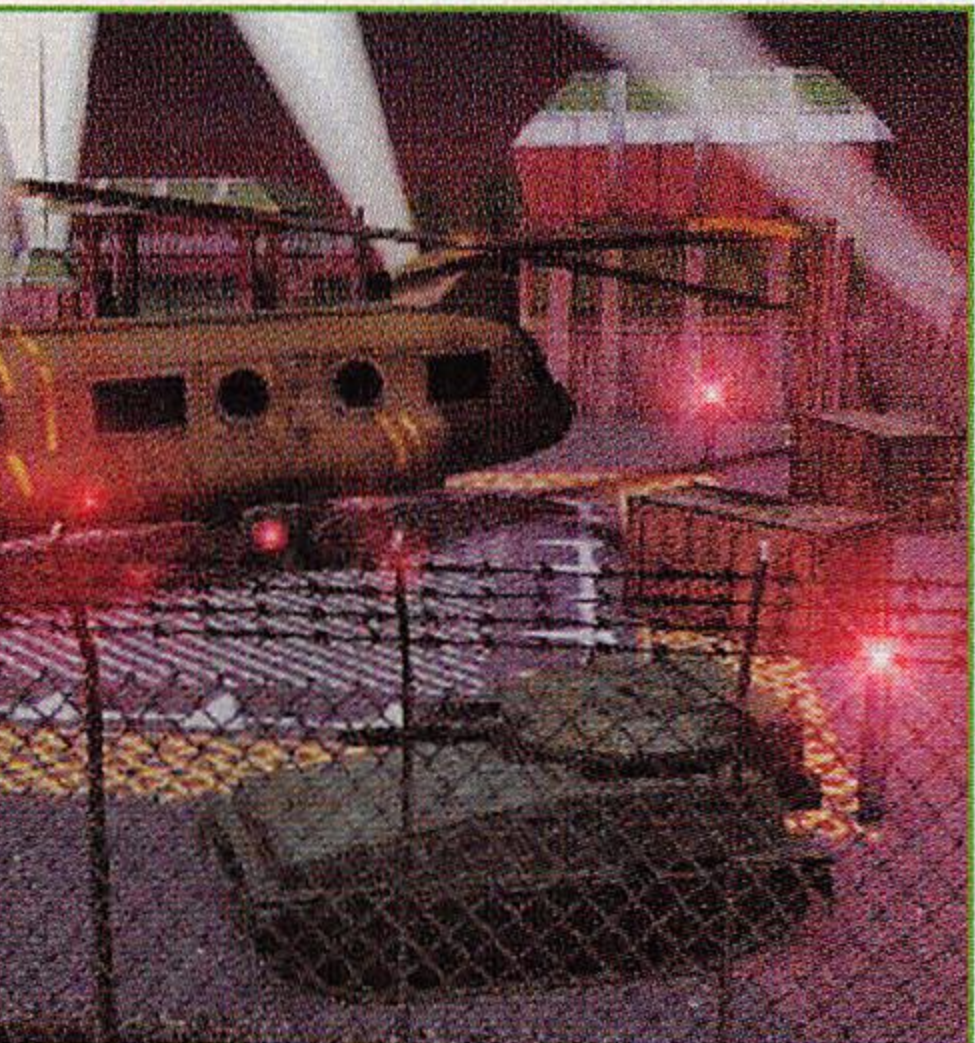
PERCENT COMPLETE

60%

DREAMLAND CHRONICLES

Bethesda brings some action to the strategy genre

While most gamers probably haven't heard of *The Dreamland Chronicles: Freedom Ridge*, we thought we would give you a first glimpse of the PlayStation 2 version. Developed by the folks who created the PC classic *X-Com*, *Freedom Ridge* is a squad-based, first-person shooter with several strategy elements.



▲ Tanks work great against alien invaders.

The game opens as an alien army starts to invade Earth. With advanced weaponry, they quickly take over and eliminate most of the planet's defense forces. Banding together, the few remaining human soldiers salvage what they can and prepare to mount a last stand against impossible odds. Doesn't this sound like a Jerry Bruckheimer film?

Gamers can expect a lot of first-person gaming like in *Quake*, but you'll also have to worry about positioning your troops effectively. Effectively giving orders to your teammates will determine the outcome of the battles. Get ready, because the invasion begins this Fall.

► Stephen Frost

the BUZZ

With its strategy elements and fast-paced gameplay, *Freedom Ridge* is an FPS to watch out for.



▲ The aliens may not look that dangerous, but they're certainly smart and very crafty.



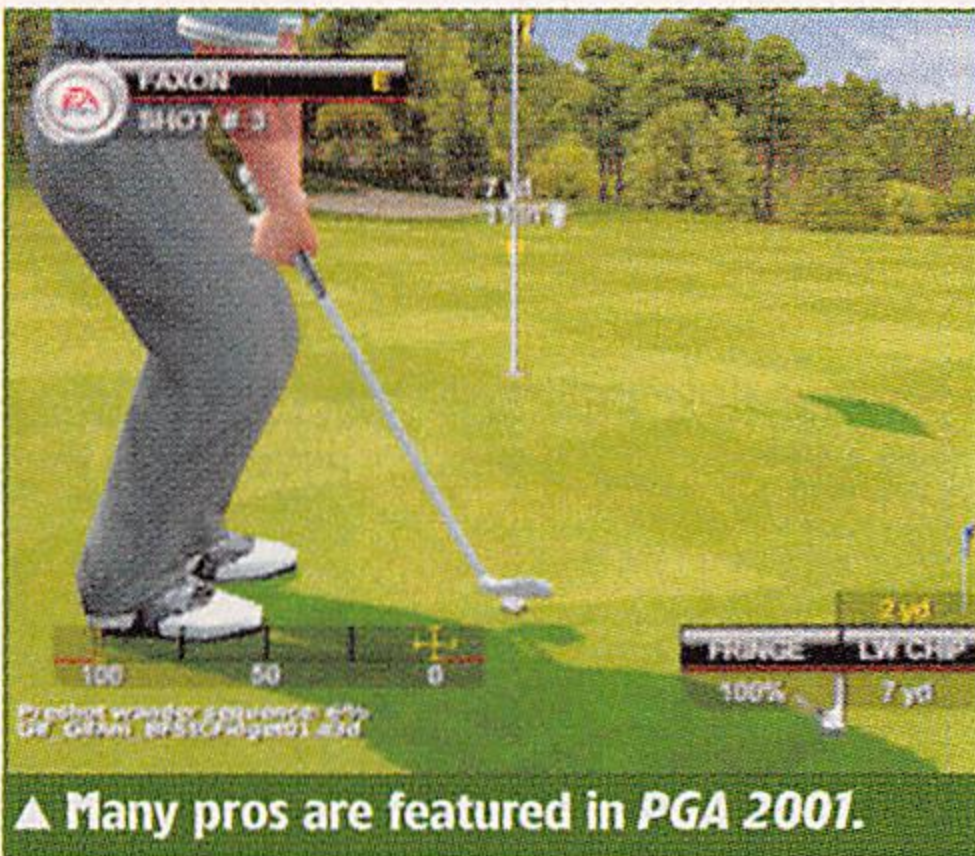
▲ This angle gives you a better view and lets you better position your troops.

PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	RELEASE DATE	TYPE	# OF PLAYERS	ESRB RATING
EA SPORTS	EA SPORTS	SPRING	GOLF	1-4	EVERYONE

PS2

PERCENT COMPLETE

90%

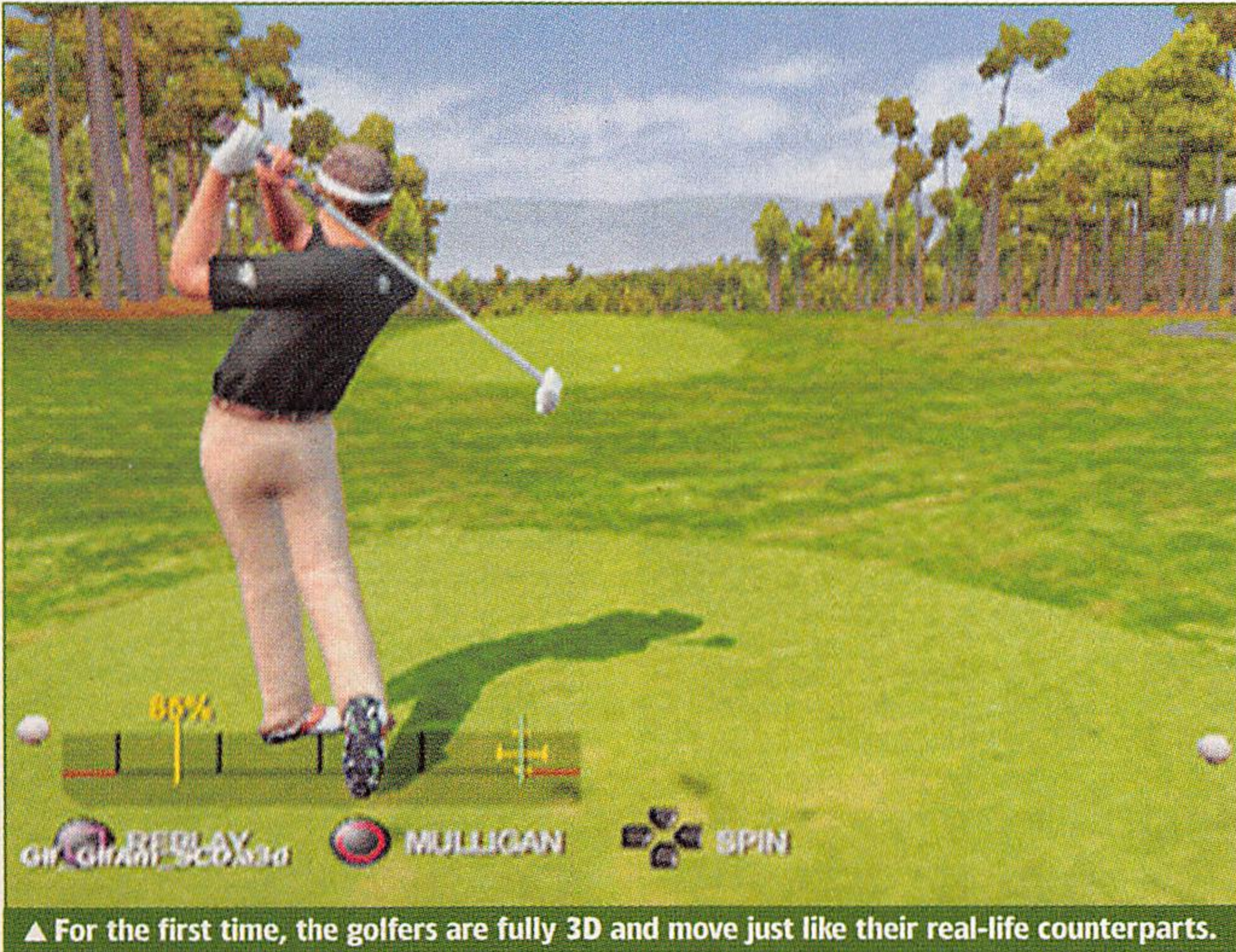


▲ Many pros are featured in PGA 2001.

TIGER WOODS PGA 2001

PS2's first golf game hits the fairway

Having pretty much nailed down all the basics of videogame golf on PlayStation, the *PGA Tour* series will mostly be receiving a graphical boost



▲ For the first time, the golfers are fully 3D and move just like their real-life counterparts.

for its appearance on PS2. For the first time, golfers will appear on-screen as fully 3D models with signature swings motion captured by the pros themselves. EA Sports is also planning a significant audio upgrade, including gallery cheers and quips from other golfers that'll change to reflect how you're playing.

The game will also be the only golf title this year to feature the Pebble Beach Golf Links course, in addition to SpyGlass Hill and Poppy Hills. Also unique to the PS2 version will be a 3D

ball lie indicator and wind meter to improve shot accuracy.

Tiger's streak may have ended, but EA Sports is hopeful that *Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2001* will continue its tradition of solid golf games on a new generation of hardware. We'll have a full review soon.

► Randy Nelson

the BUZZ

Tiger makes the leap to the PlayStation 2 with improved graphics and 3D golfers that look almost like the real deal.



▲ Each course has been recreated to scale; even the tiniest details are accounted for.

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GAUNTLET DARK LEGACY

The epic journey explodes with the all-new Gauntlet Dark Legacy, the only PlayStation 2 game with cooperative play for up to 4 people. With 8 playable characters, including 4 new alter egos, you'll slash together through 8 deadly game worlds with over 60 levels. Wield new weapons and join forces to use advanced combat moves against the bloodthirsty forces of evil. Prepare thy soul, brave one, for you are about to encounter Gauntlet Dark Legacy.



PlayStation 2



Blood
Violence

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PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	RELEASE DATE	TYPE	# OF PLAYERS	ESRB RATING
INFOGRAMES	ANGEL STUDIOS	SUMMER	RACING	1-2	EVERYONE

PS2	PERCENT COMPLETE	75%
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TEST DRIVE OFF-ROAD — WIDE OPEN

Get muddy with Angel Studios' latest off-road racer

With an excellent pair of freeform racers debuting with the PS2, Angel Studios cemented themselves as developers whose specialty is easy to learn, fun to play games. Their latest project brings their no-holds-barred, off-roading experience to an overhaul of the *Test Drive* series, Infogrames' historically hit-or-miss franchise.

Test Drive Off-Road — Wide Open will take gamers from the deserts of Utah to the mountains of Yosemite, and even the big island of Hawaii. Each massive, intricately detailed location features nearly a dozen tracks.

Improving on the high-flying action of *Smuggler's Run*, the game's developers have included a thorough physics system that allows for midair pitch and roll correction. Addressing the needs of realism-starved gamers, the developers have included just about every 4x4 that counts, including AM General's Humvee and Hummer, as well as numerous commercial and professional-grade Fords, Dodges and Jeeps. The emphasis is on realism;

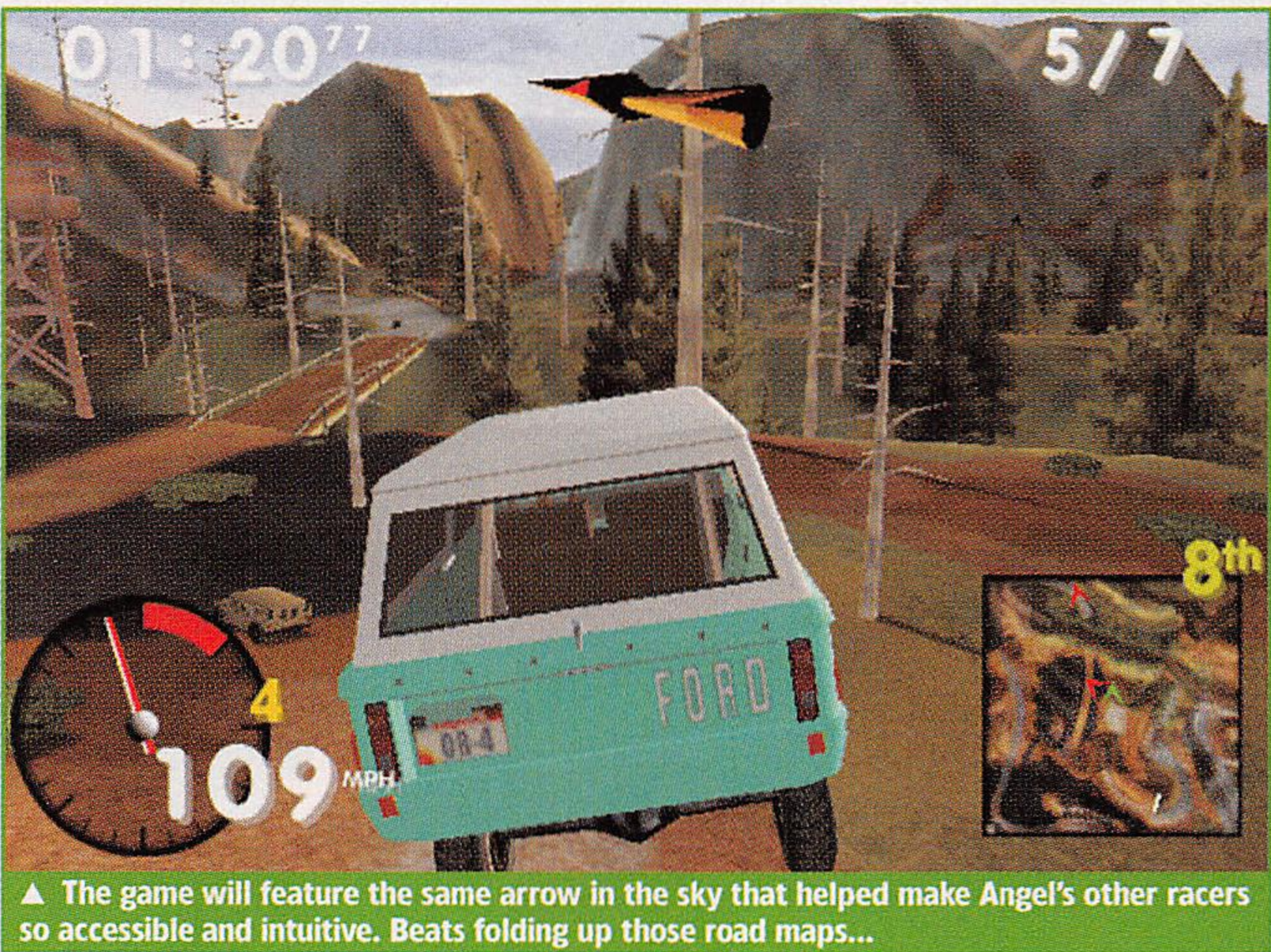
each of the vehicles will feature scads of customization options, each of which affects performance.

Visually, the levels and car models look great — crisp and detailed right down to the treads on the tires. Fancy physics and customization aside, this

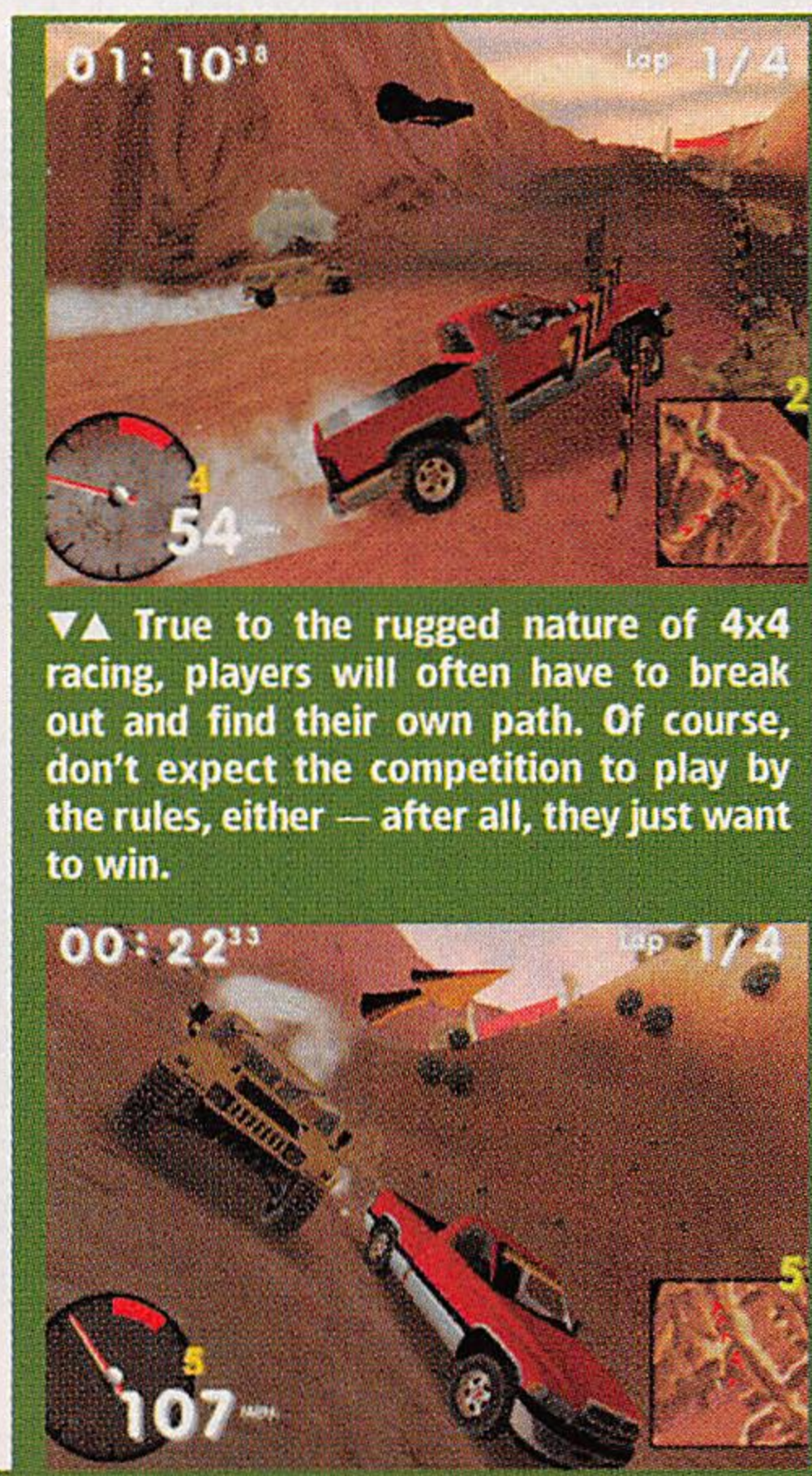
should be a simple game to get into. Mixing Angel's trademark get up and go gameplay with the opportunity to kick up some mud, *Wide Open* could well be the 4x4 racer that PS2 owners have been clamoring for.

► David Chen

The BUZZ
The PS2 could use a quality, real-world, 4x4 racer and *Off Road*, with its gameplay and physics, should fit that bill quite nicely.

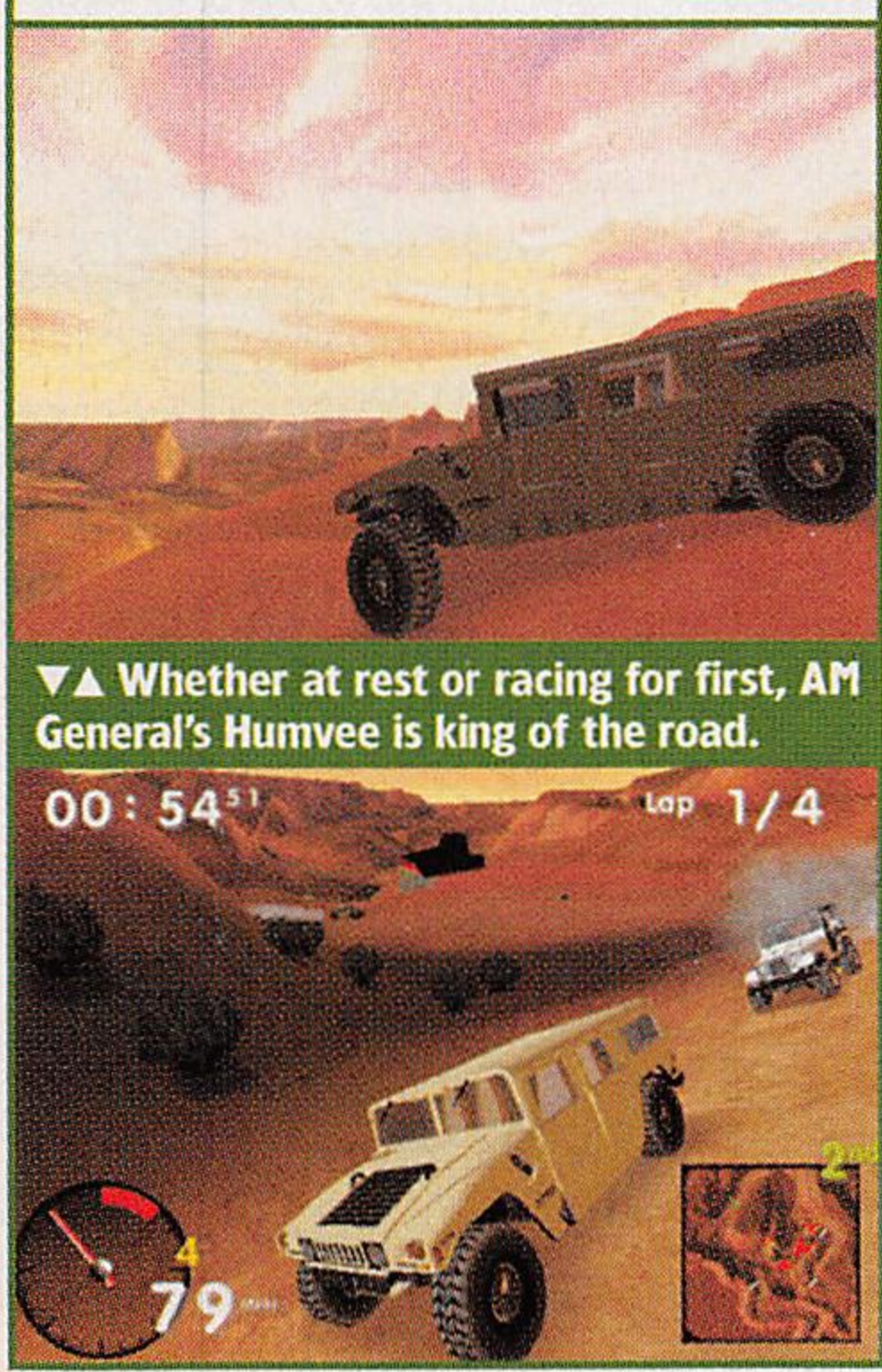


▲ The game will feature the same arrow in the sky that helped make Angel's other racers so accessible and intuitive. Beats folding up those road maps...



▼▲ True to the rugged nature of 4x4 racing, players will often have to break out and find their own path. Of course, don't expect the competition to play by the rules, either — after all, they just want to win.

IT'S A BEAUTIFUL DAY
The lighting and texture work is already impressive, and the detailing on the vehicles in *Wide Open* is fantastic.



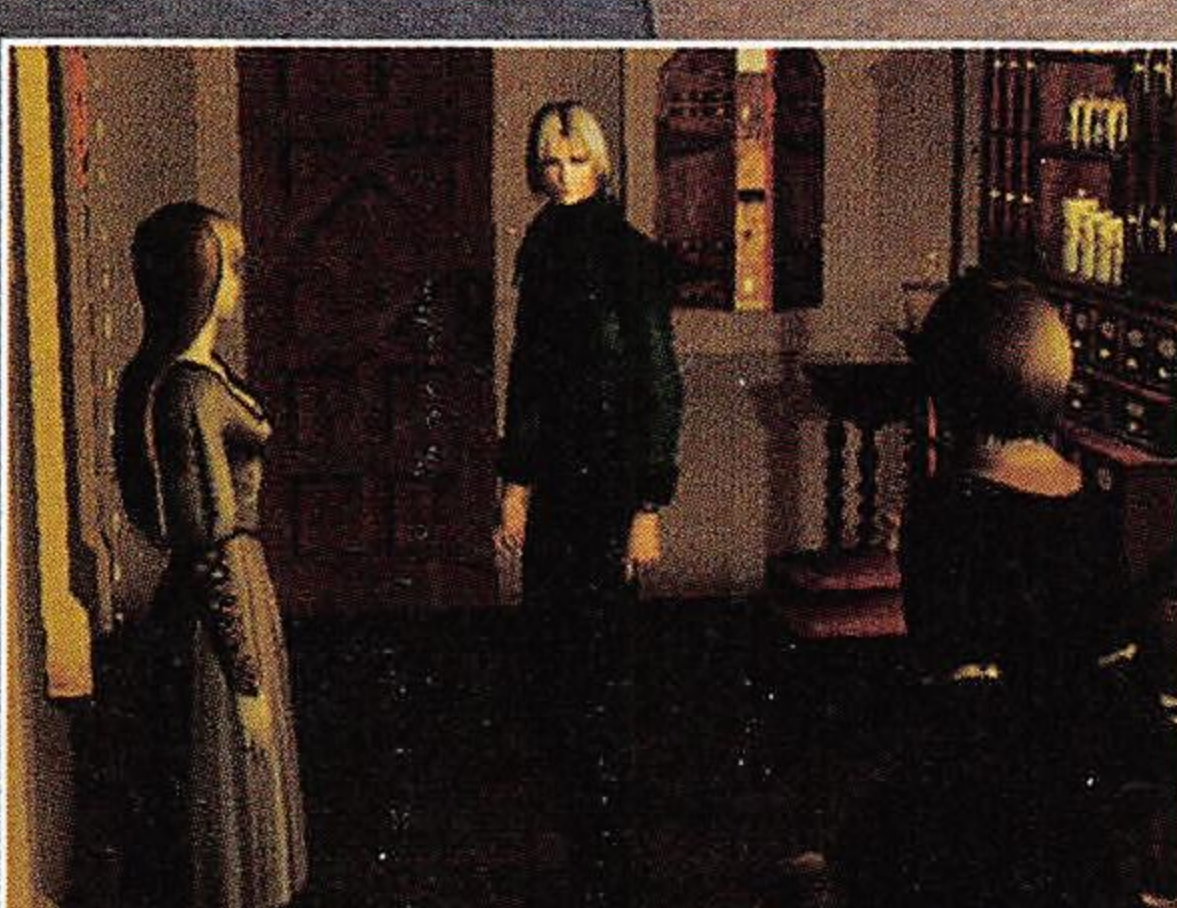
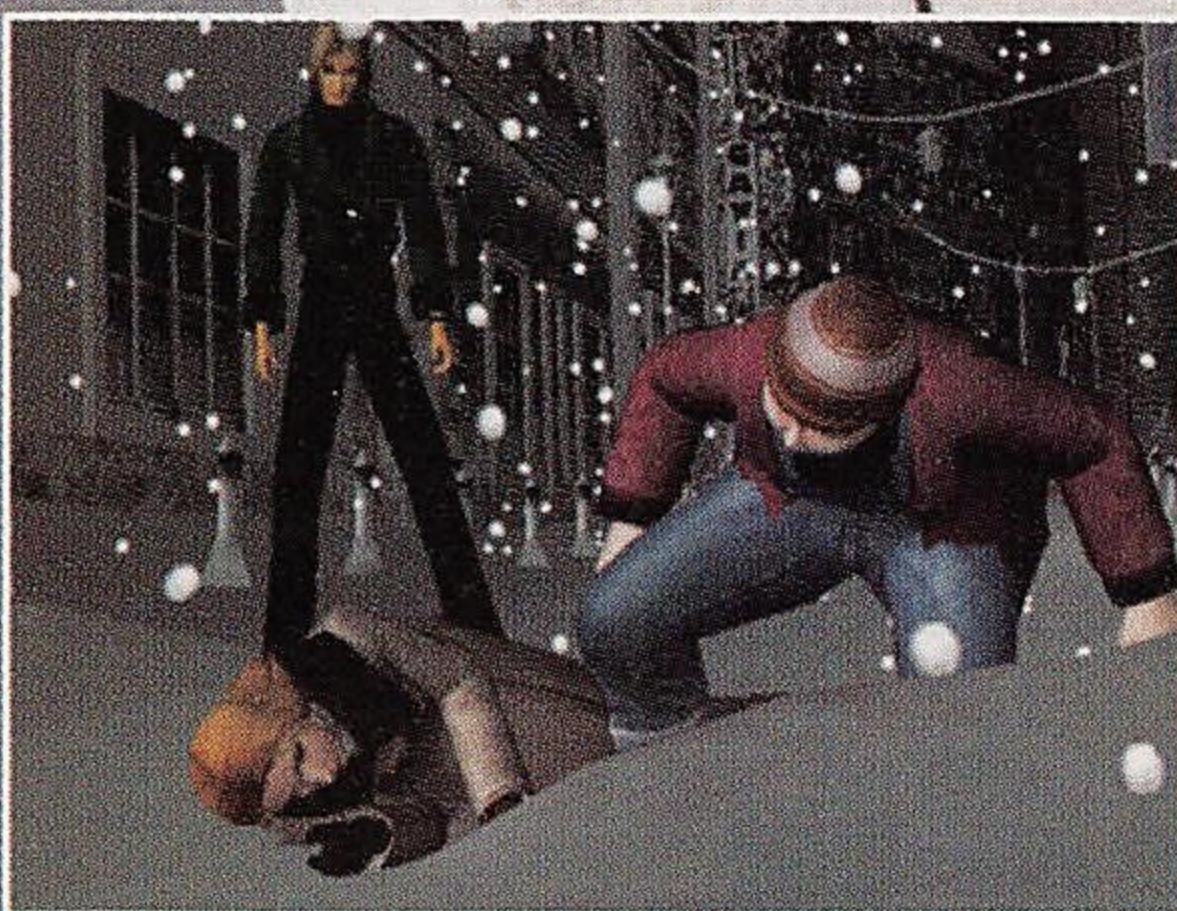
▼▲ Whether at rest or racing for first, AM General's Humvee is king of the road.



▲ As with *Smuggler's Run*, the draw-in distance is amazing. With several levels in each environment, almost any point you can see can be driven to.

Certified Entry of Death

Location of Death:	Lebensbaum, Germany
Name:	Your name here
Sex:	Male
Age:	Your age
Occupation:	Gamer
Cause of Death:	Murder
Coroner's Notes:	Victim found in the streets, lying in a pool of blood. He must now travel back in time across five different centuries to pursue his murderer and alter the course of events that led to his demise.



DA 210567
Certified to be a true copy of an entry of a Register of Deaths in the District above mentioned.
Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, LEBENSBAUM, GERMANY, under the Seal of
the said Office, the 6th day of June 2001

Shadow of Destiny™



PlayStation 2



Animated Violence



PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	RELEASE DATE	TYPE	# OF PLAYERS	ESRB RATING
SONY CEA	INCOGNITO	SUMMER	CAR COMBAT	1-4	MATURE

PS2

PERCENT COMPLETE

70%



▲ Sweet Tooth gets ready to destroy non-player traffic, condemned housing and an enemy in the background, while the ferris wheel crushes some things of its own.

TWISTED METAL: BLACK

Vehicular combat for the darkest hour

A land of darkness, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order... (Job 10:22). Although poor Job's lament captures the somber premonition of grim, darkling exile, it's a pretty safe bet he wasn't referring to *Twisted Metal: Black's* post-apocalypse, where a psychotic clown named Sweet Tooth roams the barren expanse and destroys everything in his path with his ghastly ice cream truck that transforms into an upright killbot in ultraviolent deathmatches. As you've probably heard, the *Twisted Metal* series is making its way to PS2, and as the title suggests, this cryptic incarnation will be about as chilling and diabolical as PS2's processing power will allow.

Many of the men behind *Black's* mayhem — game designer David Jaffe and his team at Incognito Studios — are from the Singletac team who created the original *Twisted Metal* and *TM 2*. These installments were well-received before 989 Studios inherited the series, and *TM 3* and *4* alienated gamingdom with a lack of innovation, poor control and physics, and the absence of the pure savage drive of vehicular combat. Now that the series is back in black, the facelift is intended to win back gamers' favor with an atmosphere inspired by twisted cinematic thrillers (*Silence of the Lambs*, *Seven*) and vehicular combat with the sensibilities of fighting games.

With a premise drawing largely from

flicks like *Mad Max* and *Road Warriors*, *Black* will feature 14 well-armed playable vehicles, ten of which are immediately available and four that are hidden, including some of our old

favorites from the PlayStation versions (the hearse, semi, ice cream truck, El Camino, etc.). Getting inside the numbers, there will be eight single-player levels, and ten deathmatch

TWISTED METAL REVISITED

A number of old favorites make their eerie way into *Twisted Metal: Black's* field of 14 vehicles.



▲ The hearse performs a power slide.



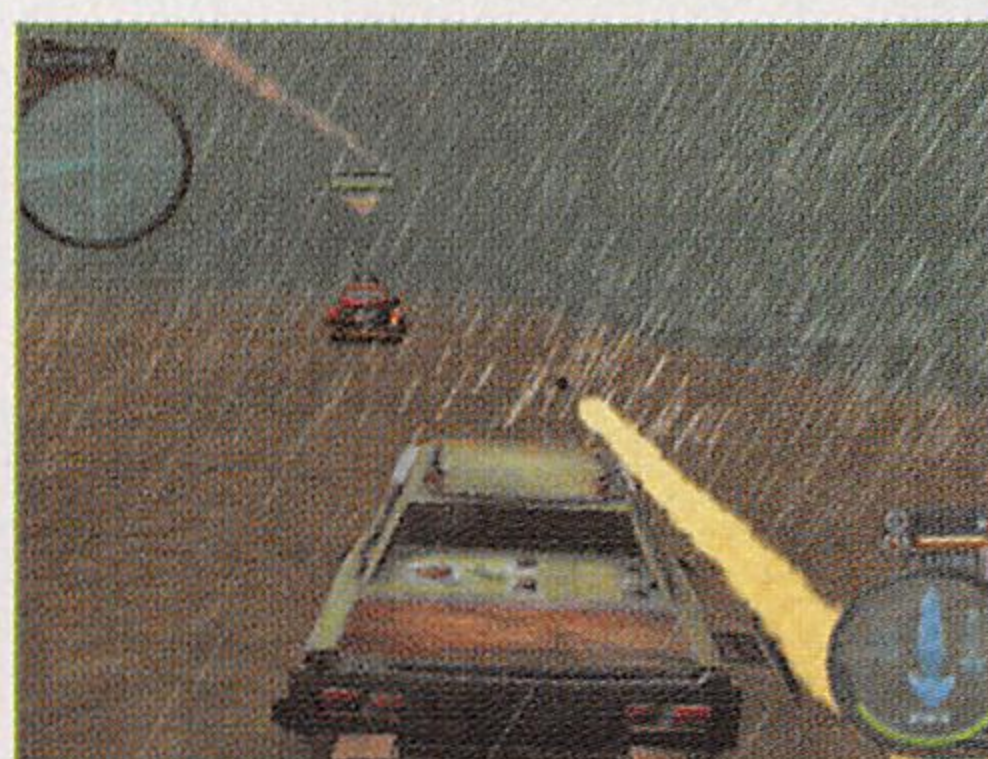
▲ Spectre says "Hey!" to the ice cream truck.

maps in Pure Death, Endurance, and Co-op Modes. Traffic, pedestrians, and interactive objects, not to mention your opponents, make for limitless opportunity for destruction, and the varying terrain and ever-changing weather conditions in perpetual dusk and night lend a bleak atmosphere to *Black's* massive battlegrounds.

Incognito Studios has developed a proprietary engine for this game which apparently eliminates pop-in and produces nice textures, while able to render large explosions, sweet real-time lighting effects, and multiple vehicles on-screen without sacrificing 60 fps. Along with some clues that help piece together Sweet Tooth's (and others') disturbing backstory, *Black* includes a 4-player split-screen combat mode.

Check out these new screens while you wait for the ultimate darkness to fall this summer.

► Tommy Layton



▲ Ever-changing weather effects, like this torrential rain, make the battleground a tad more grim.



▲ Spectre demonstrates the meaning of interactive battlegrounds. Walls can be ripped down and objects manipulated.

the BUZZ

With a darker atmosphere and reinvented vehicular combat, *Twisted Metal* is making strides to win back lost gamers.

START YOUR ENGINE

Incognito's proprietary engine should be able to render several objects, animations, lighting effects and vehicles on-screen without slowdown at 60 frames per second.

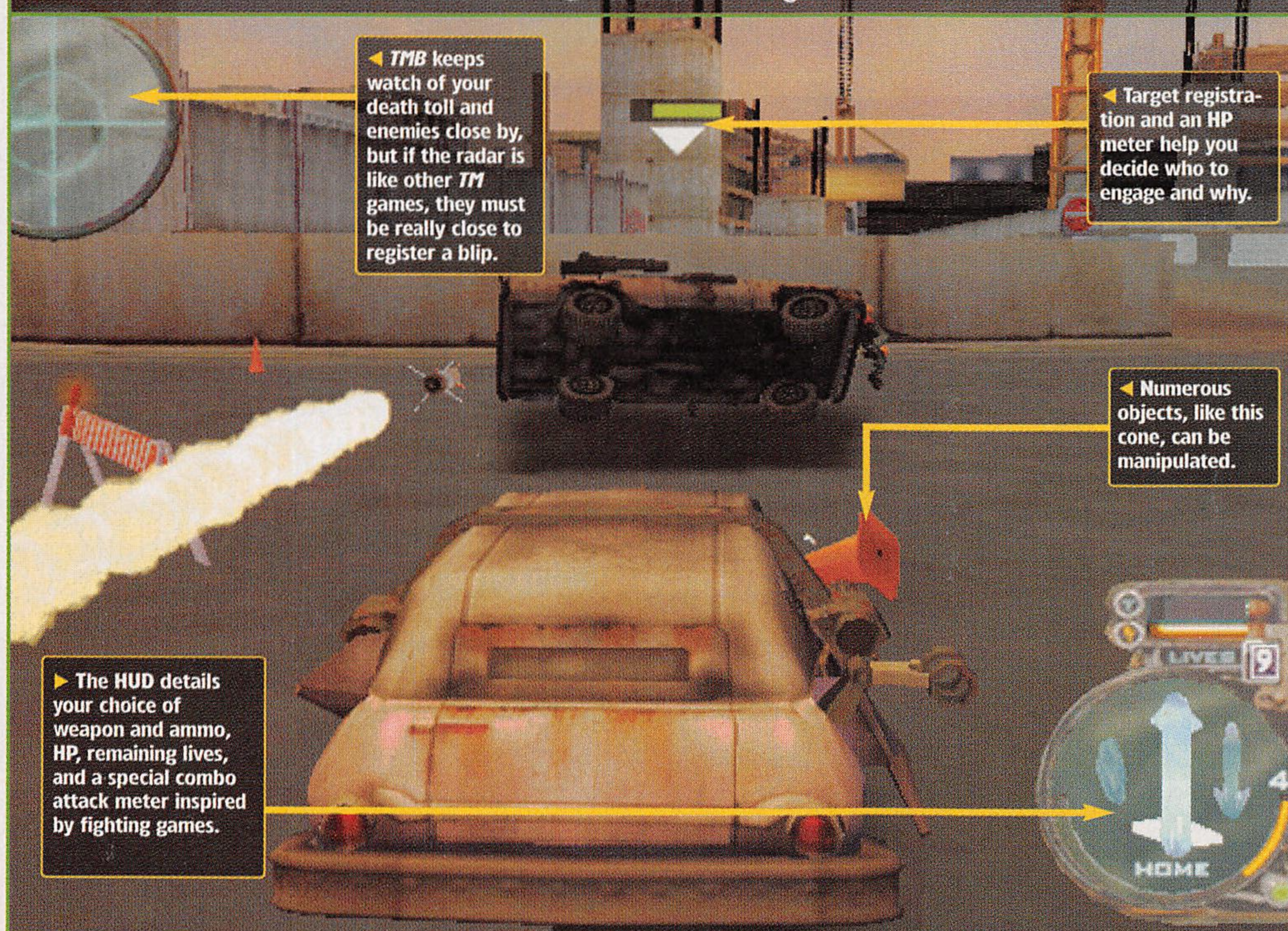


▲ You'll be able to shoot the axles off the ferris wheel, shoot down a jumbo jet and a water-tower, and watch explosions at 60 fps.

"This cryptic incarnation will be about as chilling and diabolical as PS2's processing power will allow"

PSM BREAKDOWN

An up-close look at the game in action



► *TMB* keeps watch of your death toll and enemies close by, but if the radar is like other *TM* games, they must be really close to register a blip.

► Target registration and an HP meter help you decide who to engage and why.

► Numerous objects, like this cone, can be manipulated.

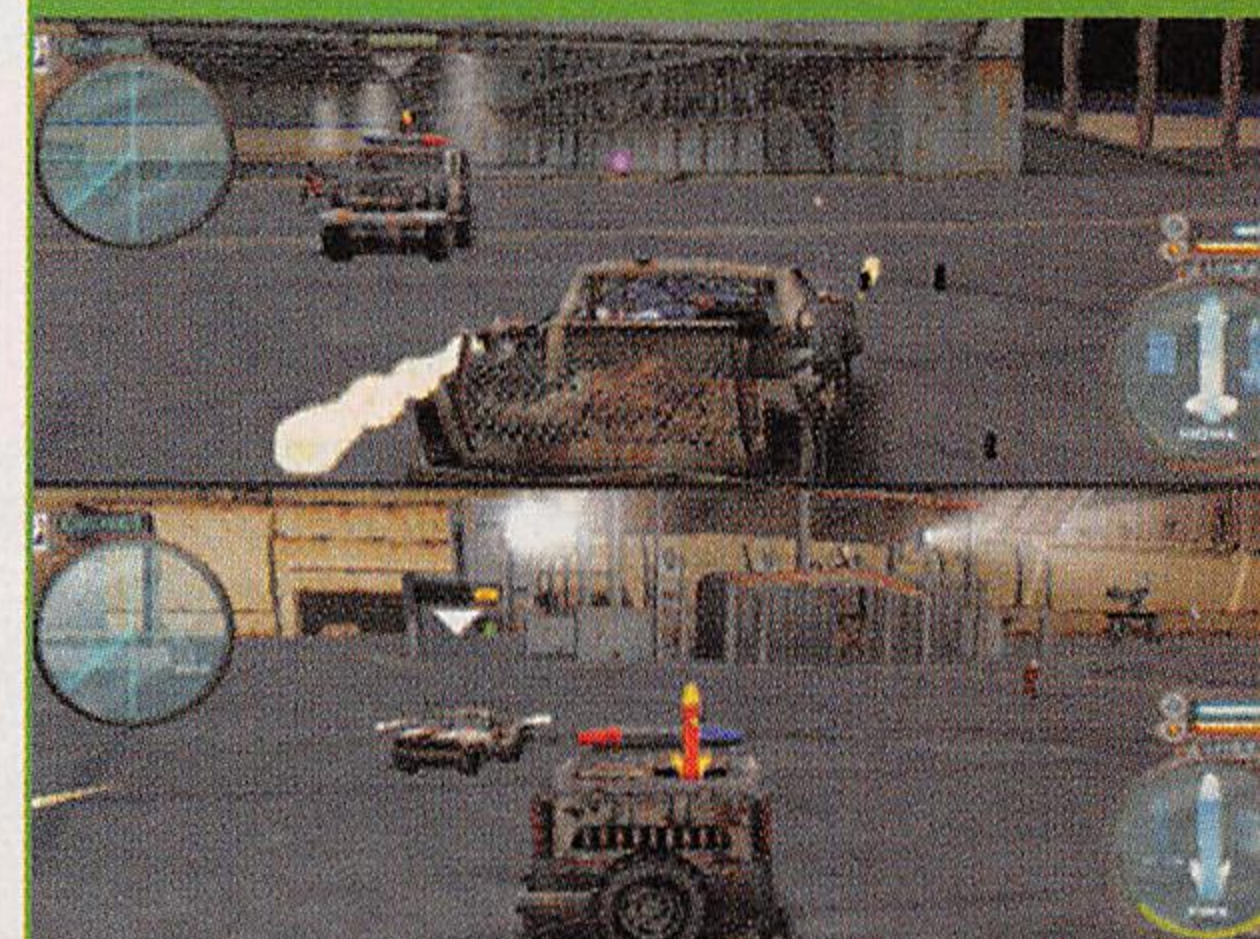
► The HUD details your choice of weapon and ammo, HP, remaining lives, and a special combo attack meter inspired by fighting games.

2 OR 4 TO TANGO

Multiplayer modes may well be the biggest draw of vehicular combat. Invite some friends to play, because *TMB* will support up to four players in split-screen deathmatches.



▲▲ *TMB* offers ten massive deathmatch battlegrounds, and the choice of horizontal and widescreen formats.





CONFERENCES MAY 16-18

EXPOSITION MAY 17-19

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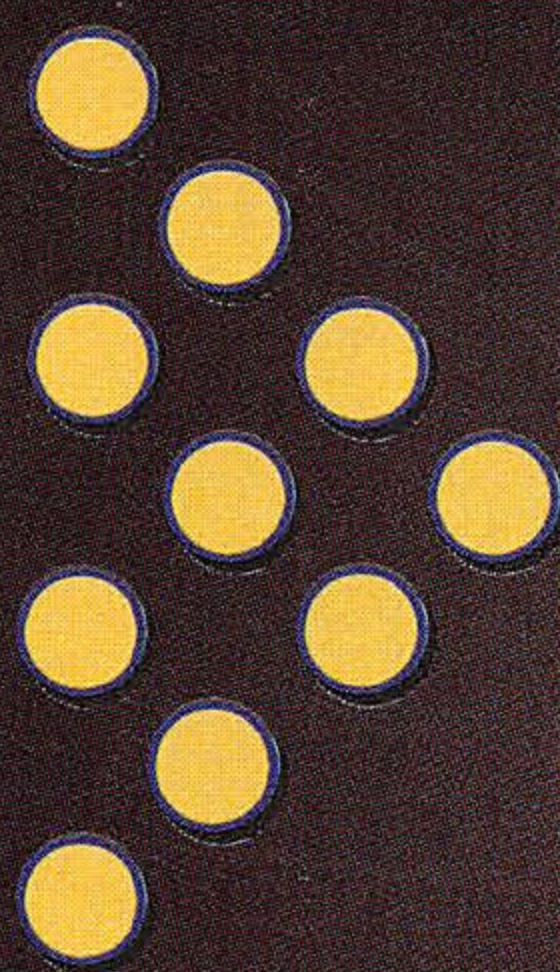
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STRATEGY

Tips, guides and cheats that will make you a winner

Contents

92 ▶ ATV OffRoad Fury

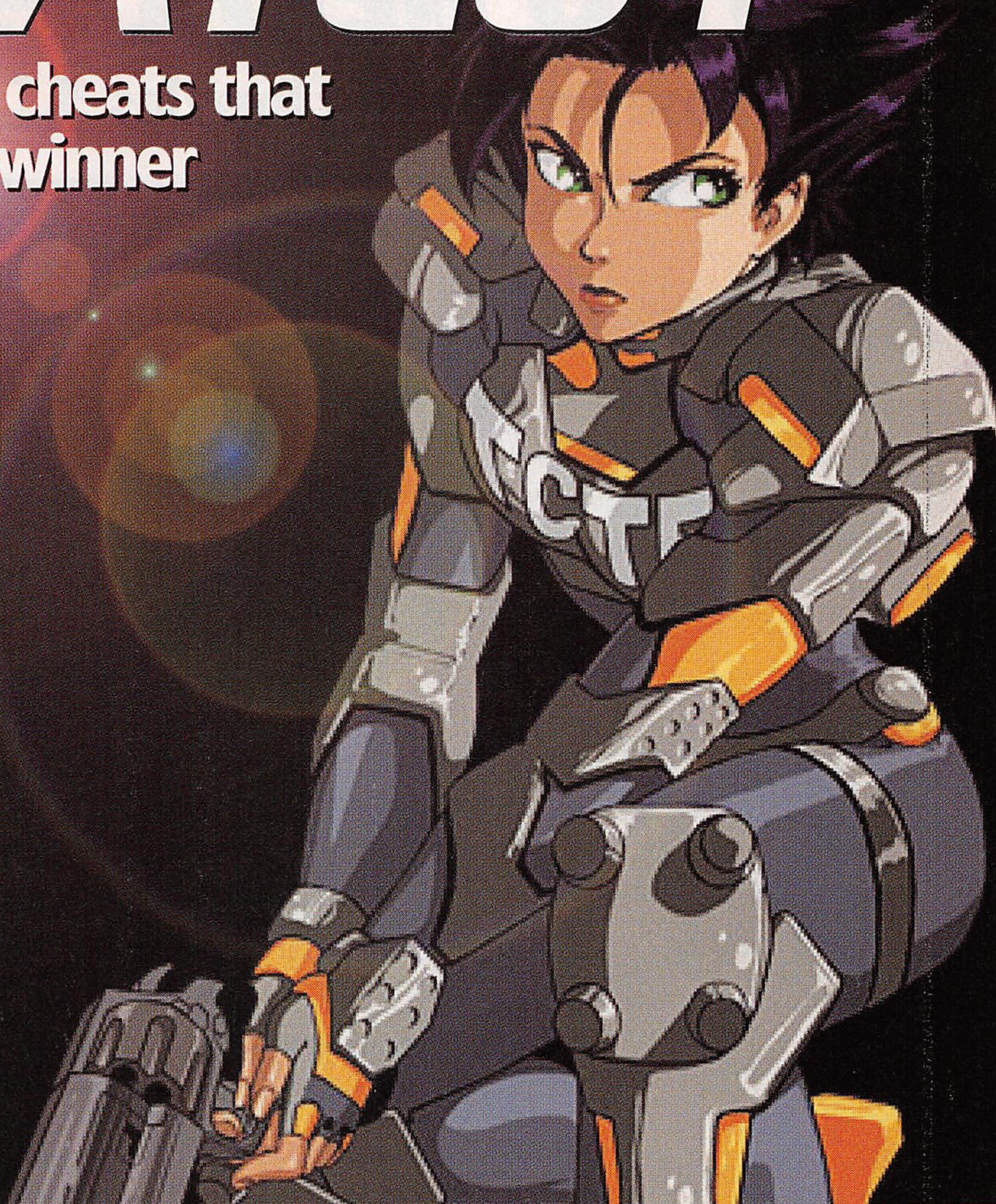
86 ▶ Fear Effect 2: Retro Helix

90 ▶ Oni

094 ▶ CODES

Oni

We've got all the secret special moves and tips you'll need to complete the game on **pg. 90**



TAKE THE PSM CHALLENGE!

RULES: Challenges are limited to one entry per person. That means you can't send an entry for each challenge; if you do, you'll be disqualified. If you cheat or use codes, you'll be disqualified. The final letter for the contest will be accepted on **May 1**. If there are multiple winners, then we'll do a raffle. To prove that you accomplished one of our challenges, either send a picture or a video tape (sorry, but we can't return them). Sorry, no e-mail entries!

SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO: PSM April Challenge # (the challenge number you're entering), c/o Imagine Media, 150 North Hill Drive, Brisbane, CA 94005.

CHALLENGE #1: Oni

Simply beat the game and photograph or tape any part of the ending.

CHALLENGE #2: Kengo

Unlock all of the characters in Versus mode and photograph or tape the character select screen.

CHALLENGE #3: Original Fighting Game Character Design

Submit your own original drawing of a fighting game character. Do not draw a character from a game that already exists. The one we like the most will win!

CHALLENGE WINNERS for the January issue:

FINAL FANTASY IX

MOH: UNDERGROUND

DOA2: HARDCORE

Steve Ramos of Waipahu, Hawaii

Mathew Madrid of Aurora, Colorado

Luke Kozoil of Highland Park, Illinois

THIS MONTH'S PRIZE PACKAGE:

Metal Slug X

Fear Effect 2: Retro Helix

Winback: Covert Operations

Theme Park Roller Coaster

Z.O.E.

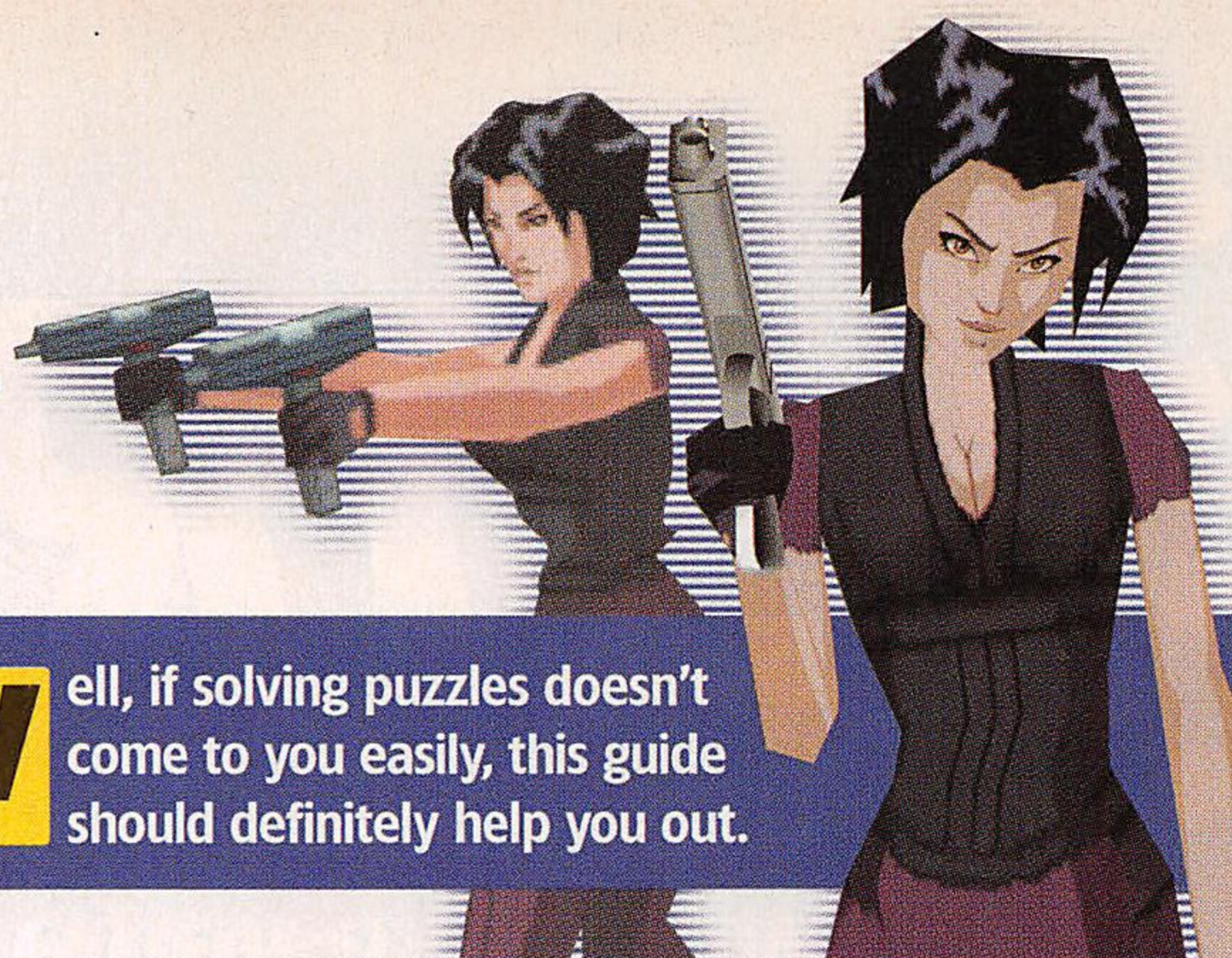
PS2 Gameshark



FEAR EFFECT 2: RETRO HELIX

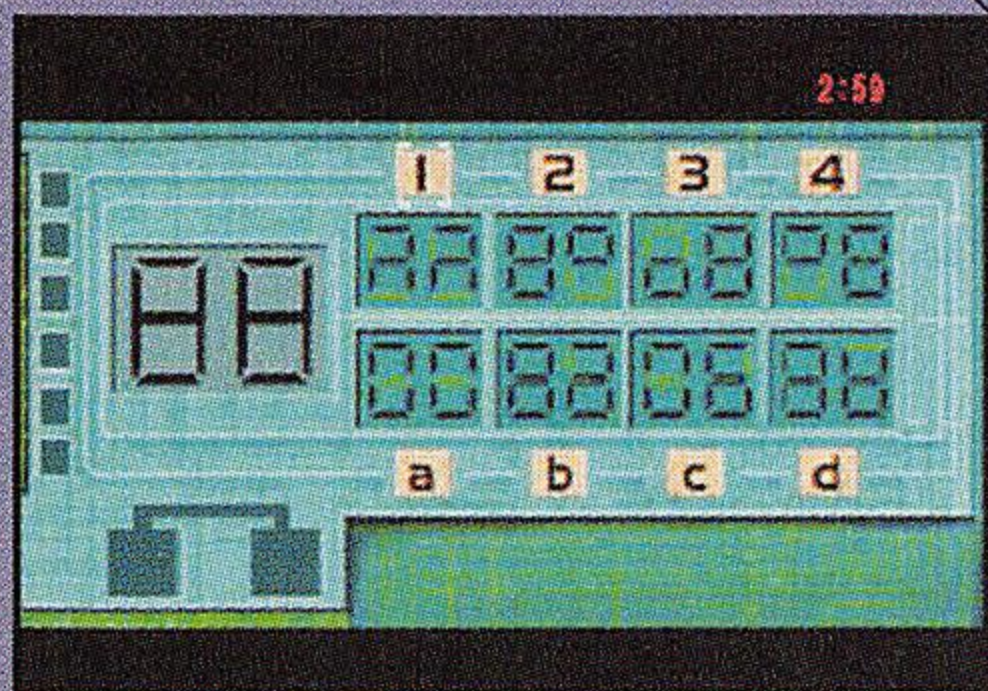
Solve Those Frustrating Puzzles

Well, if solving puzzles doesn't come to you easily, this guide should definitely help you out.



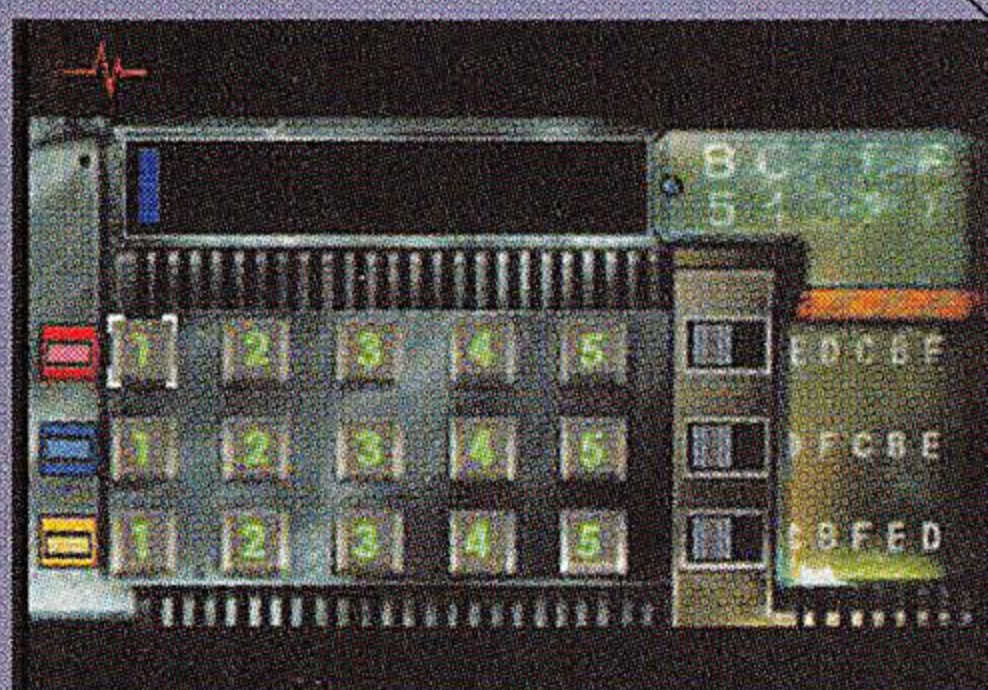
DISC 1

DOUBLE 88



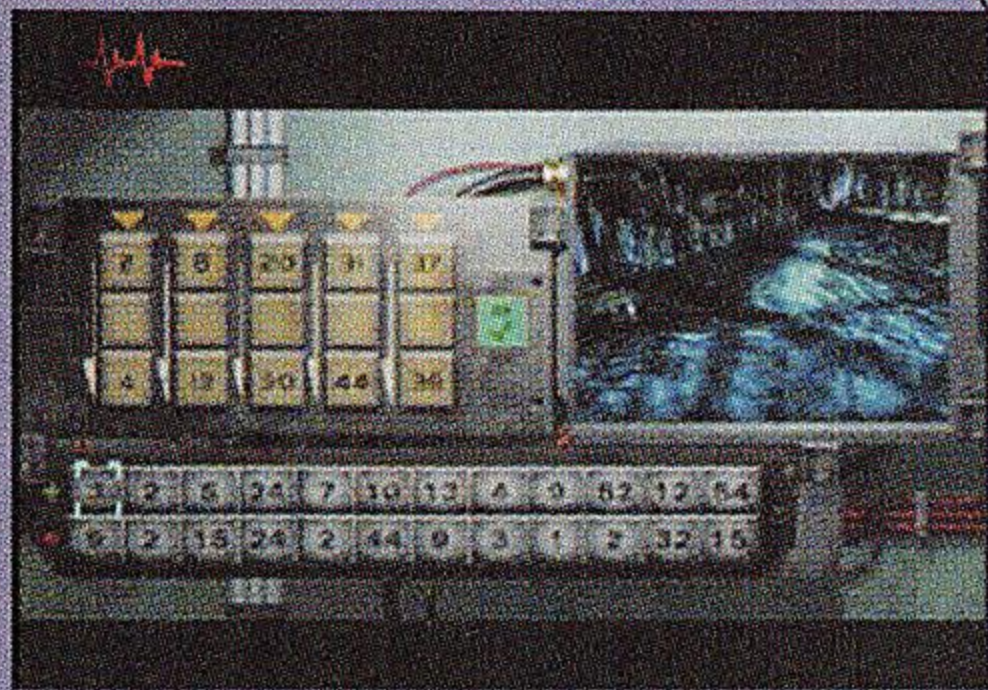
Enter 1, C, D, 3, 2, 4. Then enter 1, 2, 3, 4, A, D

RED, BLUE, YELLOW CODE



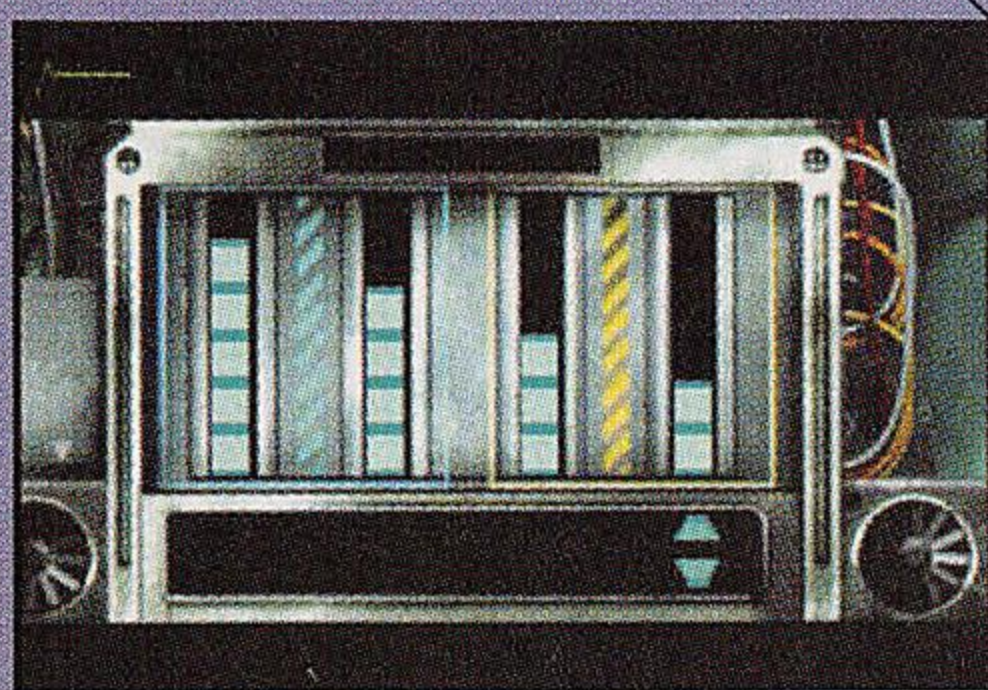
Match the letters of each row with the corresponding numbers in the upper right-hand corner. So, B is 5, C is 4, D is 3, E is 2, and F is 1.

Drain the Water Under the Bridge Puzzle



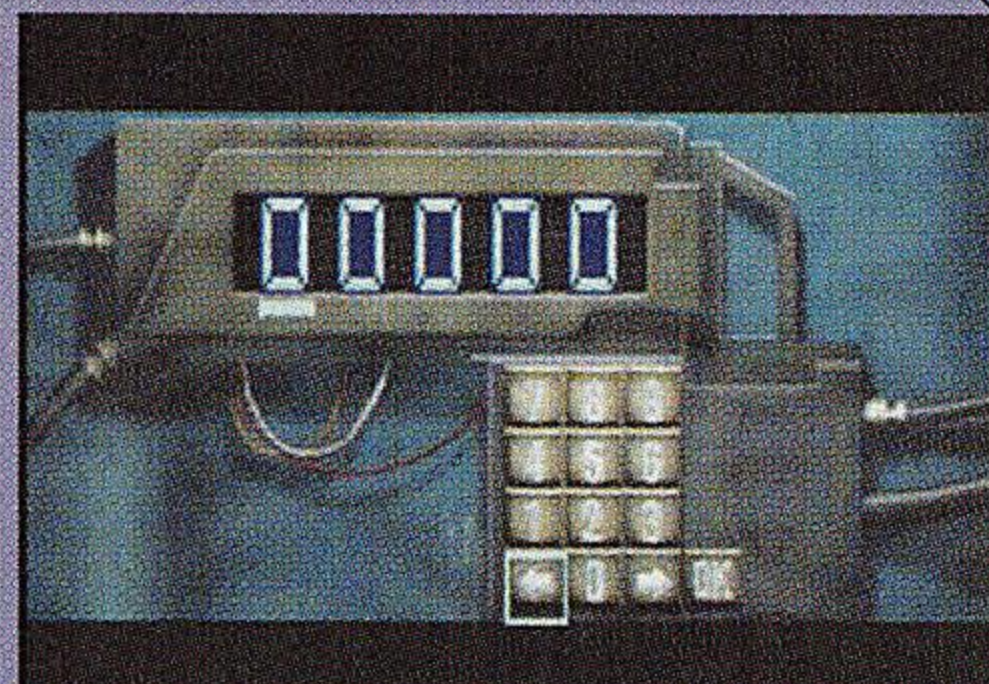
The code is 2, 5, 10, 13, 1. The center numbers are the difference between the two numbers on the top and bottom.

BAR CODE



The color forks that light up reveal the code to stop the steam. Increase the two blue bars to 5 and 4, and the two yellow bars 3 and 2.

LOCKED DOOR



The code is 92572. You get the code from video tape B.

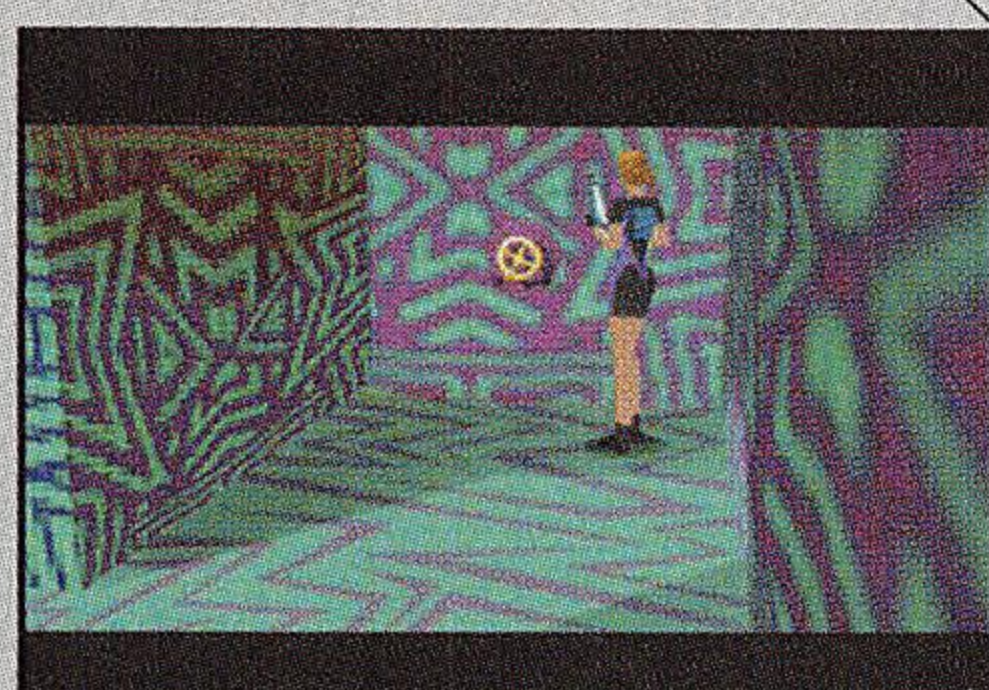
BOSS 1



You simply have to shoot him into the electrified walls three times to kill him.

DISC 2

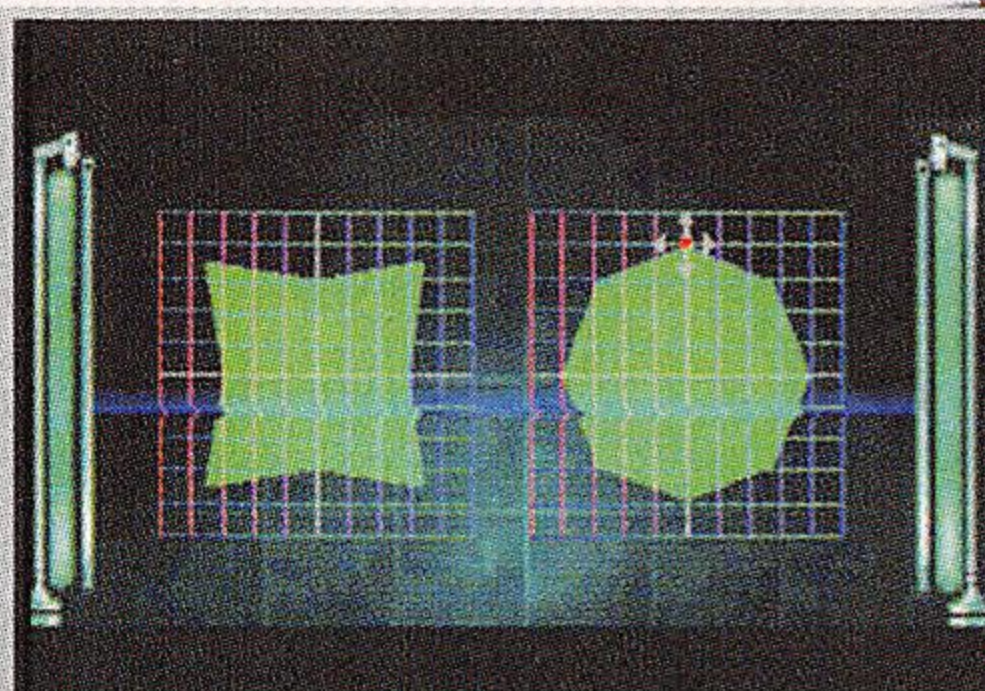
THE MAZE



Do not shoot out the rug attachments. Turn off the waterfall by turning the yellow nozzle in the maze. Now go and step on the second bar to move down a wall in front of you. Snipe the enemies. Then return to the first bar.

GEOMETRIC SHAPES PUZZLE

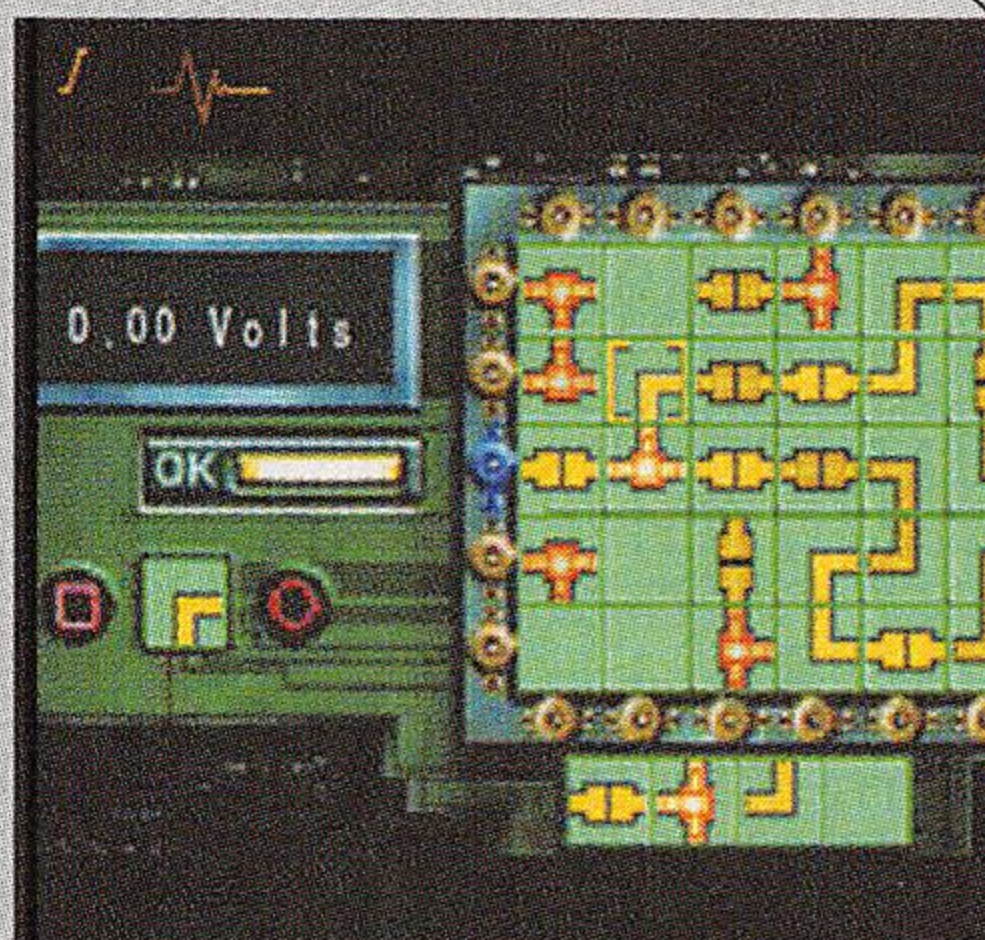
1. ↓↑↓↑↓↑↓↑
2. ↑↓↑↓↑↓↑↓
3. ↑↑↑↑↓↑↑↑
4. ↓↓↑↓↓↑↓↓



5. ↓←↓←↓←↓←
6. ↓→↑←↓↑↓↑

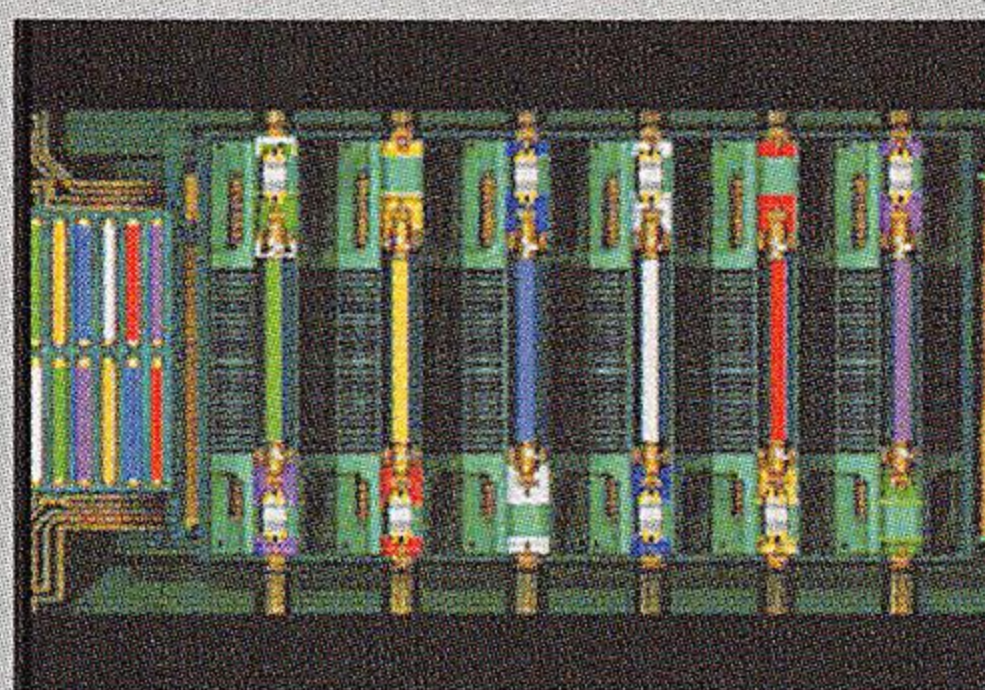
Tommy's help here is very much appreciated! Thanks, buddy!

CLOSING THE CIRCUIT



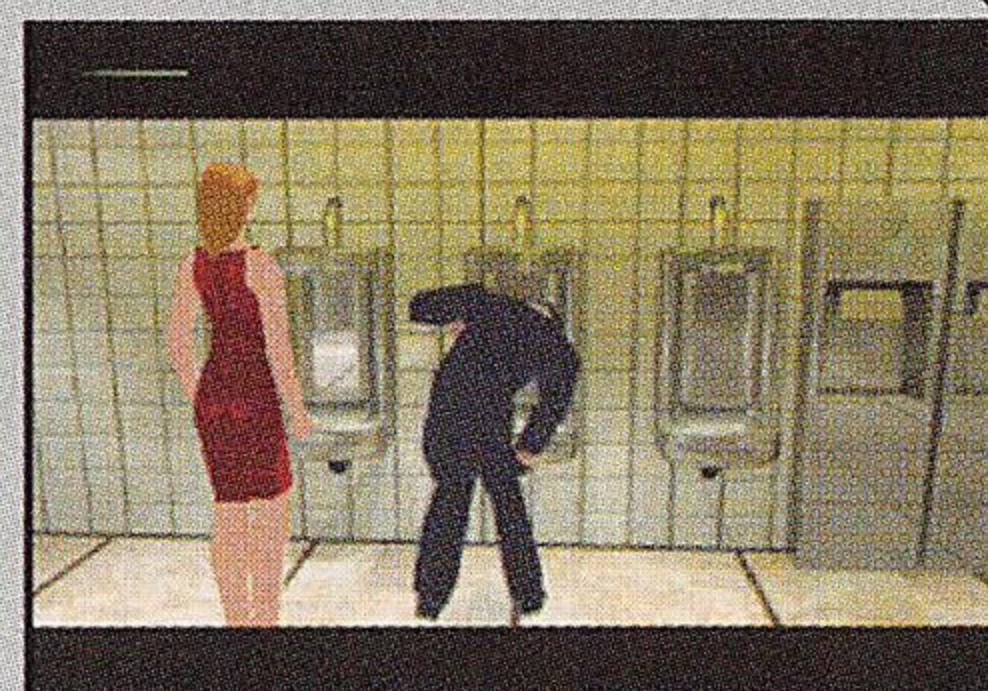
The instructions to this puzzle are a bit confusing, so don't follow the directions. Simply replace pieces until you reach zero. Check out the following picture. Thank Steve for figuring out this one.

COLORED BARS



The color sequence should correspond to the color sequence on the bottom example on the left. That sequence is white, green, purple, yellow, blue, red. In order to change the bars, you must deactivate the electric current. This is done by removing the spark plugs on the connectors. If you wish to stop the flow running through the blue bar, you must remove the spark plugs from the top and bottom blue connectors.

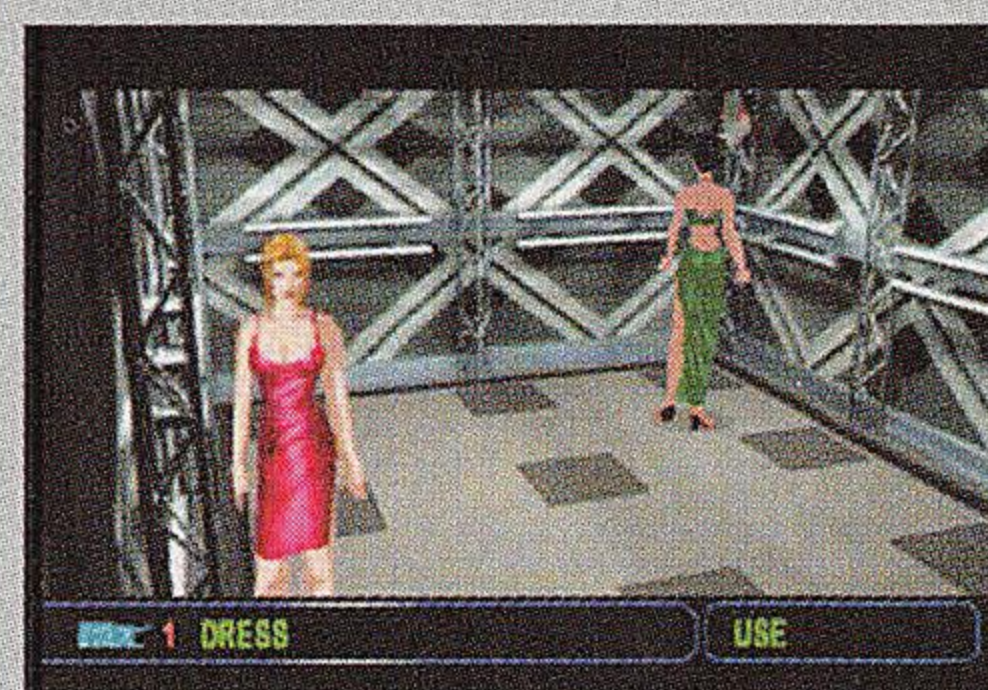
MEN'S BATHROOM



Go to the men's bathroom and retrieve the elevator access card from the guy puking his guts out. Since the area is small, and there's a guard, be patient and let him walk into a stall before you make a move.

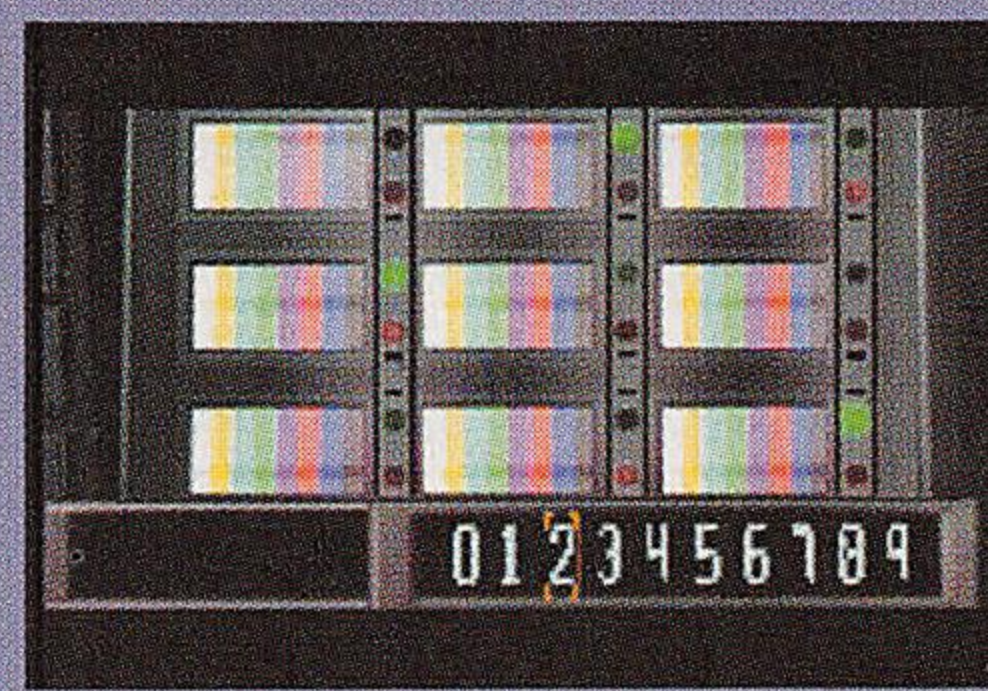
ELEVATOR DRESSING

This is a bit confusing, but all you guys out there will figure it out. Take off Hana's dress in front of the camera.



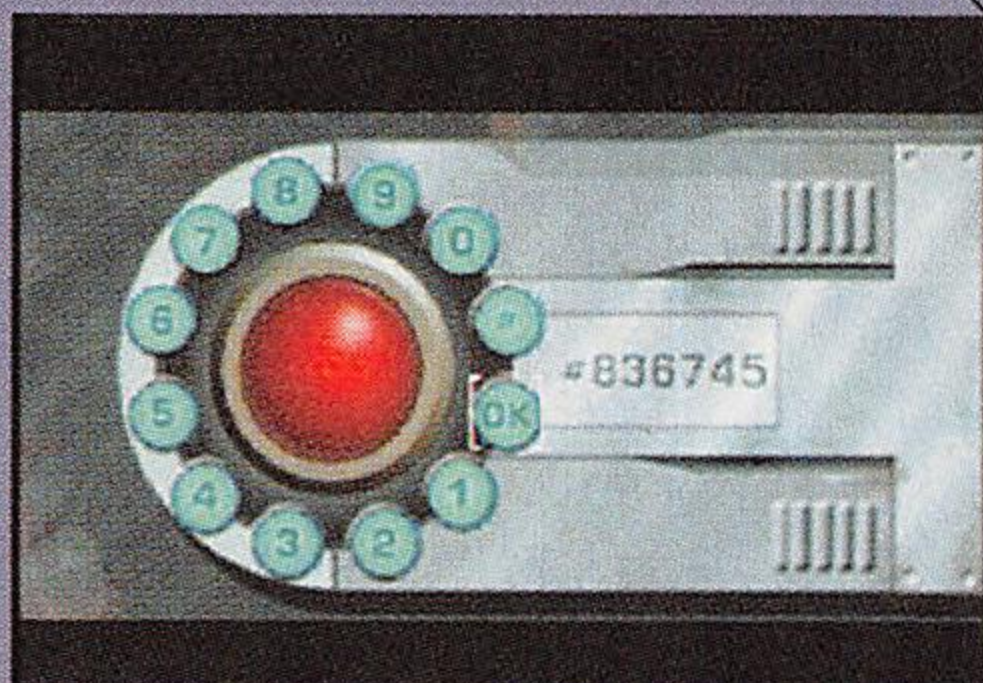
DISC 1

VIDEO ROOM CODE



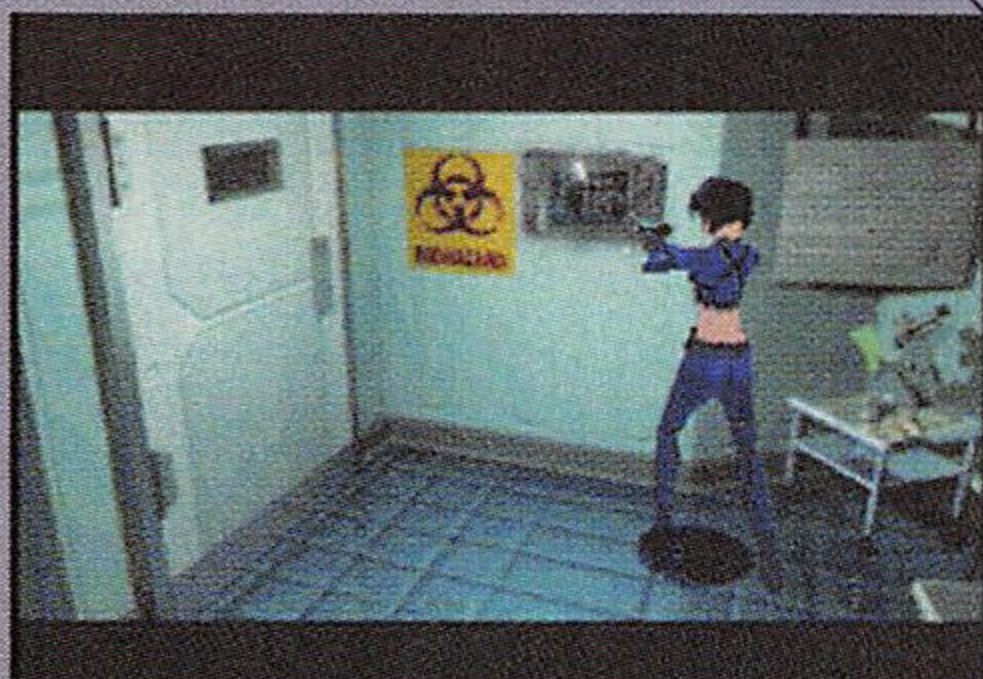
Obtain this code from the combination lock in the other hall from the elevator. The code is 836745. Go to the video screen at the other end of the room. Scrutinize the screen; it reveals hints for later.

COMBINATION LOCK



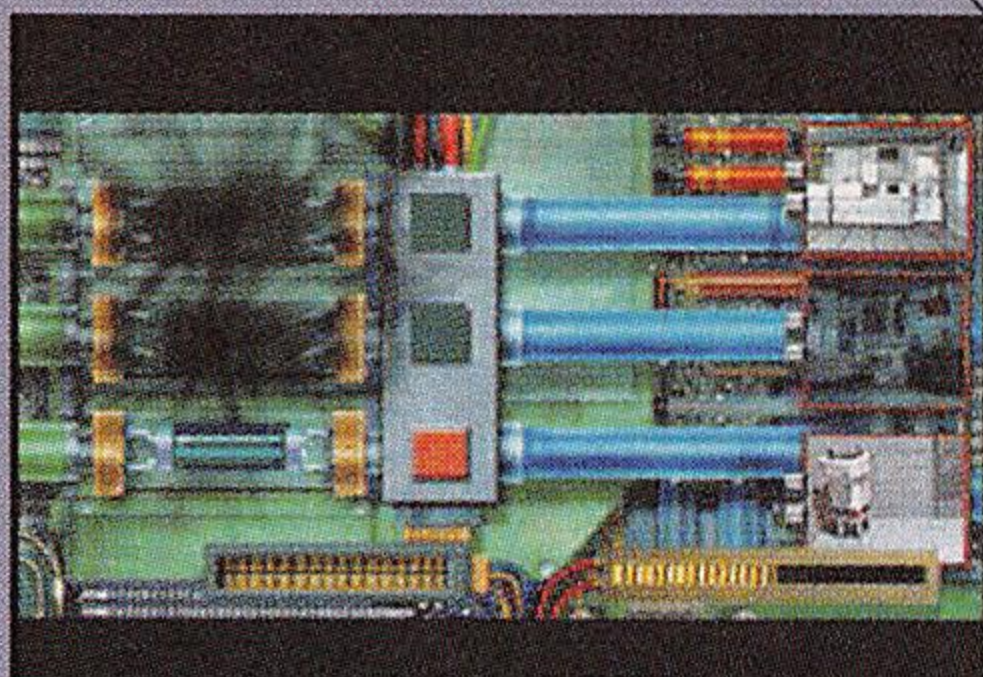
Return to the combination lock and input the code 4615207. Go through the door at the other end by using the Bypass card. In the next room, use the Flash Disc on the computer. This is complicated to explain, so we'll tell you what to do. In the first column, move the number 4 to row 3; in column 2, move the number 2 to row 5; in column 3, move B to row 6; in column 4, move 3 to row 2; in column 5, move D to row 6; finally, in column 6, move A to row 4.

MOTION SENSOR LOCK



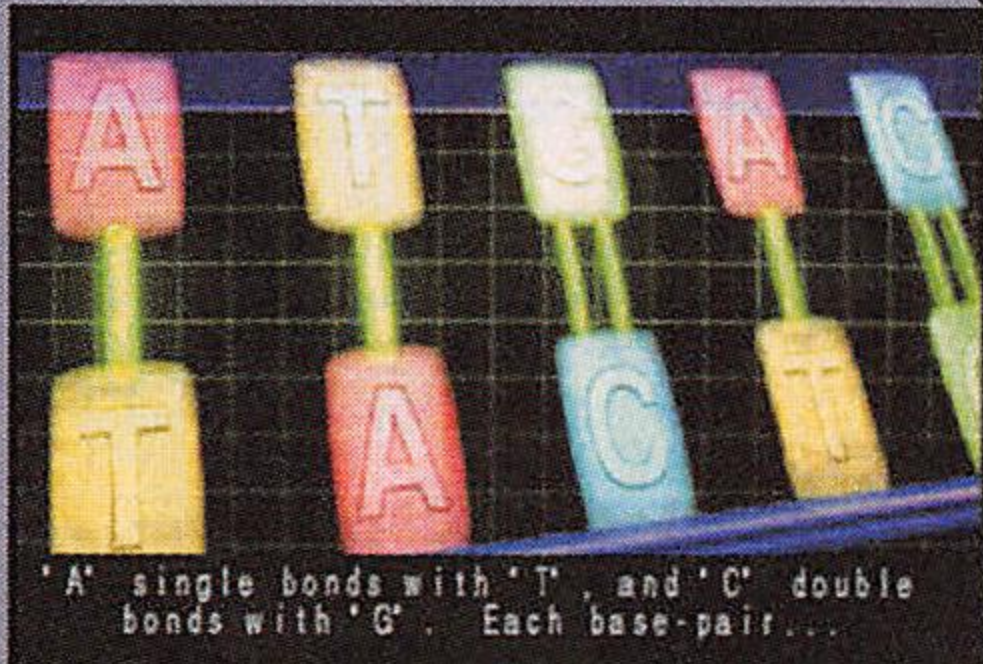
Find the security pad near the door and try to use it. Since it cannot be used, immediately hit triangle to exit from this screen. Now shoot the security pad.

FUSE BOX



Insert the fuse in the top slot. Also, to make each of the rooms functional, remember to switch the fuses.

DNA MATCHING



Once you obtain all of the blot cards, go to the computer monitors and

insert the card that has the same color as the monitor screen. When this is done, you'll find one monitor that reveals the puzzles secret. It indicates that you must match red with yellow and vice versa, and blue with green and vice versa. Now go to the back room containing three eyeball robots. The computer at the end of this room allows you to fill in the DNA sequence. Input the color bars according to the DNA relationships.

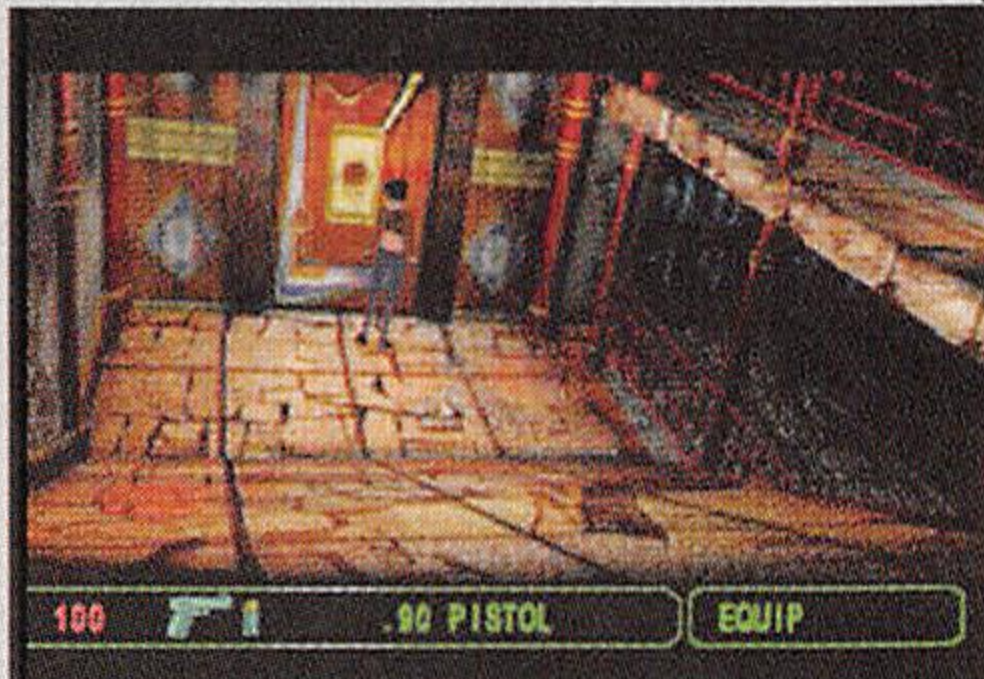
BOSS 2



This guy is a pain, but the method of beating him isn't so tough. Just hold down the rolling button and roll out of the way whenever he fires. Immediately after you roll, fire. Continue this process until it is dead. Be careful, however, of getting stuck in a corner; you will be pummeled.

DISC 4

THE MIRROR



Once you get the final piece of the mirror with Hana, go to the tomb that Hana fell into. Insert it into the circular area of the gold plate on the door.

DISC 3

TOMB COINS



1. Moon and Sun: find these in the circular room when you speak with the ghost. Turn off the moon and then sun

coins to deactivate the door.

2. Butterfly and Moon: Turn off the Butterfly coin and then the moon coin to open another door.

3. Butterfly, Lily, and Moon: deactivate these coins in this order to open the door to the Terra Cota room.

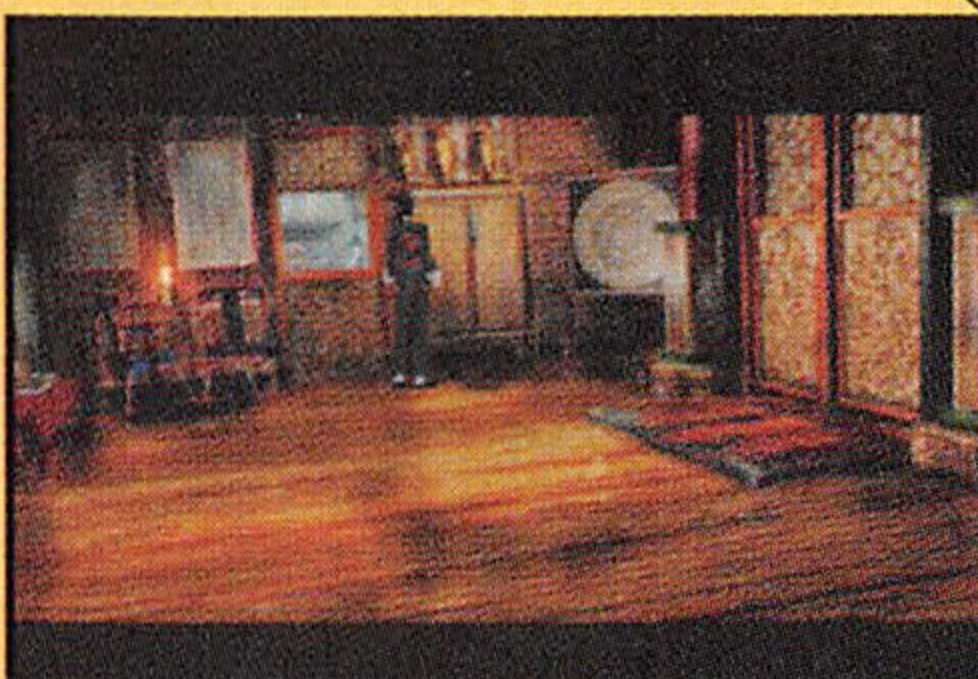
4. Sun, Butterfly, Moon, Lily, and Bull: finally, input this order to unlock the tomb.

HANG MAN



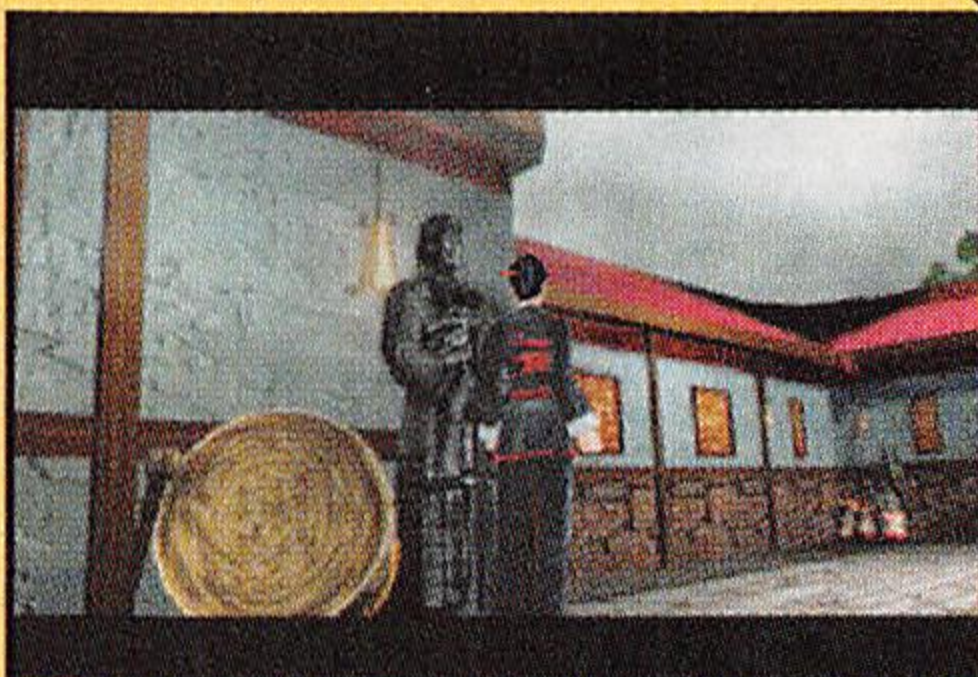
To complete this puzzle, simply sleep with the mirror.

THE SHADES OF THE PAST



Open both shades inside of the room to change day into night. Change night into day, and then give the skeletal remains to the couple.

THE BLACK STATUES



Use the bandages to cover their eyes. This will allow you to show the court the woman's ghost.

BOSS 3



He is fairly simple. Just dodge his attacks with the roll, and then when the monster turns into Deke, fire!

FALLING PATHS



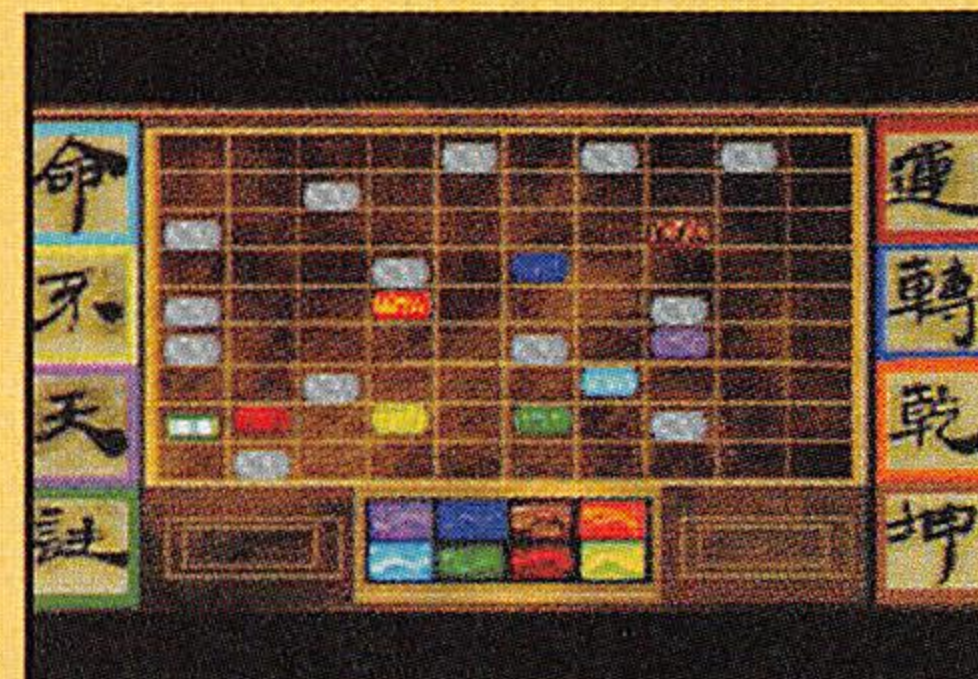
After you outrun the rock monster, you'll have to be careful of a set of paths; some of them will fall. Stay to the right part of the screen. When you see the path start to fall, begin running as fast as possible.

FIRE WALKING



Position yourself at the bottom of the screen. Wait for the two fires to go out. Now run through safely.

CHINESE CHARACTER PUZZLE



You must move the little colored rectangles to their respective positions on the bottom. Use the following instructions to pass this easily:

Green: move the green to the left into the yellow. Push the green down into its place.

Yellow, Red, and Light Blue: move the yellow into the rock to the right. Move the Red into the yellow. Move the light blue to the left into the rock. Push them both down into their spots.

Orange: Move it into the rock on the right. Push it down.

Blue: Move it into the rock on the left, and then push it down.

Purple: Move the rock in the same row as purple to the right. Move the rock at the top in the third column from the left down. Push the purple to the right, and then down into its position.

Brown: Move the upper rock in the second column from the left down, and then move it to the right. Move the brown to the left, down, and finally to the right. Put it in its place.

DISC 2

THE PLATES AND CRYSTALS



Water Crystal

Each one is colored corresponding to the element type. After you receive the Shovel and Fan, go to the fire area. Grab the Empty Gourd. Now go to the Earth area and use the shovel to obtain the Rock Salt. With this, go to the water area and use the grinder to get regular salt. Run down the dock and use the salt to get rid of the Sea Monsters and get the Water Crystal.

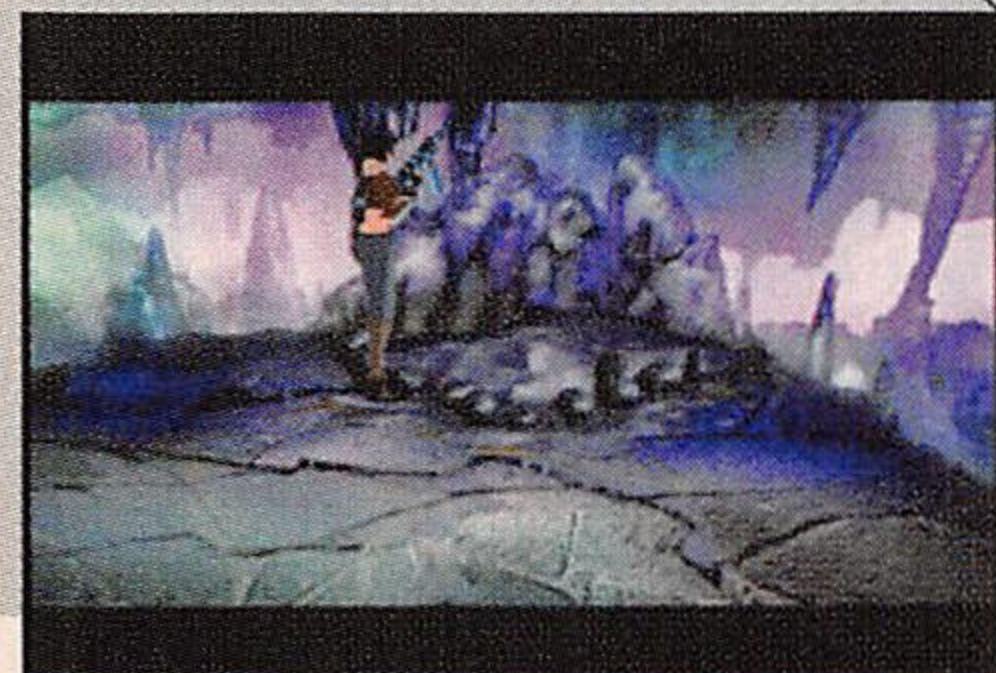
Gold Crystal

Get water at the dock with the Gourd. At the Gold area, use the Salt Water to create a solid walkway. The Crystal is in the back right corner. When a section lights up, it means that you can walk on it. Just watch it for a few minutes and you'll quickly discover the pattern.

Fire Crystal

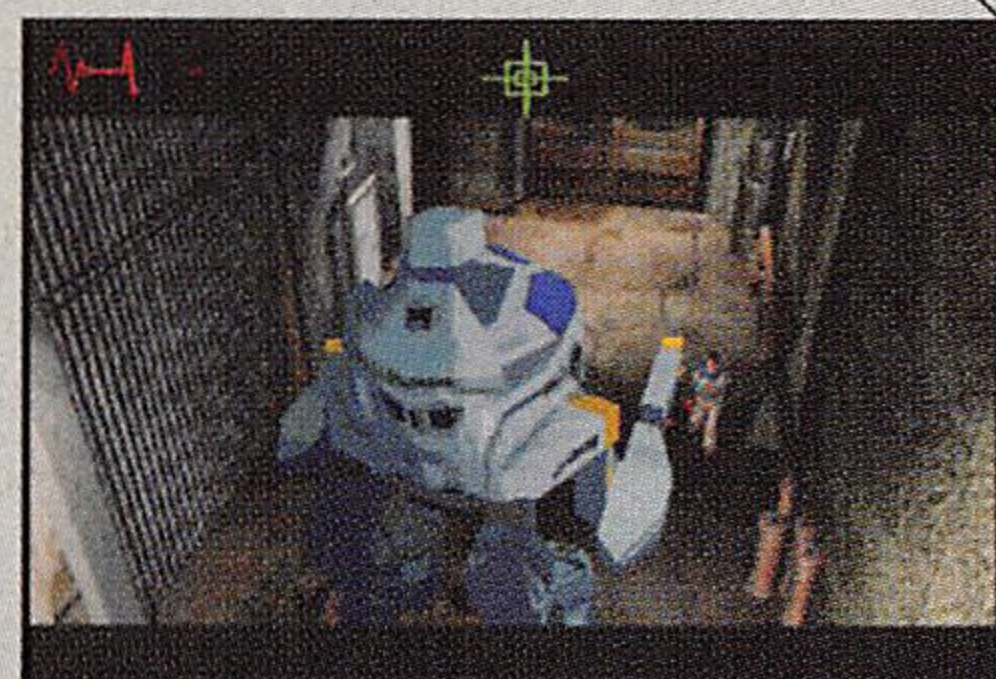
Go to the Water area and activate the wheel to obtain fresh water. Put fresh water in the Goblet. Go the fire area and drink the water on the gray pad. Go into the third fire from the left and grab the crystal. Melt down the empty Goblet in the furnace behind you and fix the spade.

MORE DIGGING



Return to the earth area and dig a hole. Place the crystals in the hole and use the Gourd to pour fresh water on them. Return to the beginning of the level with the diamond.

GLAS SECTION



Good Luck — the game gets quite cheap here! The best weapon to use is the shotgun. Use the EMP to knock out the robot. At the fan section, walk in between the fans; you won't be hurt. Go to the middle fan that stops and fall through.

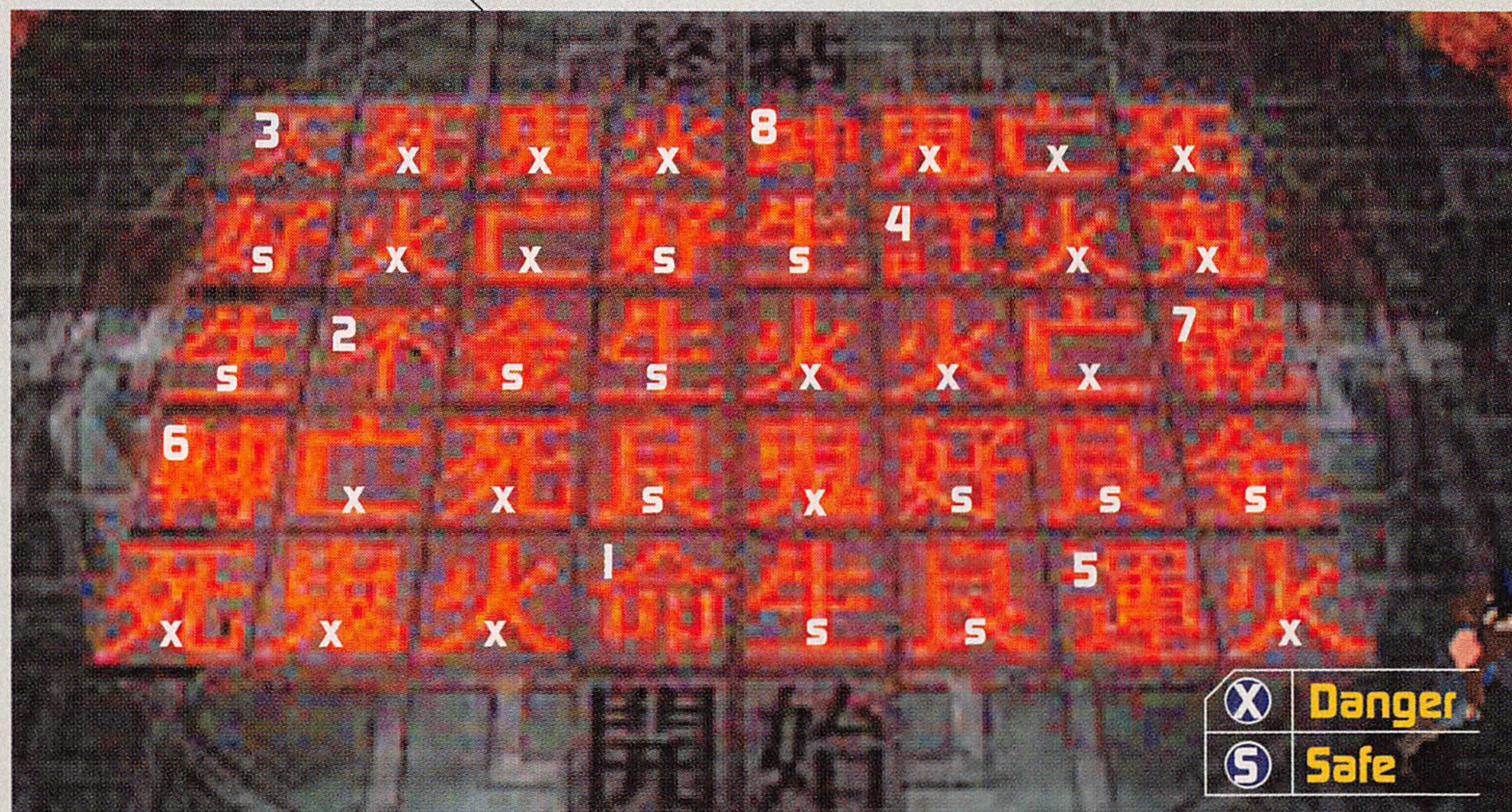
ELECTRICITY



This is much simpler than it looks. If you look at the entire screen, you'll notice that there are two brown rectangular platforms and two silver ones. If you stand on these, you won't be electrocuted.

DISC 4

CHINESE CHARACTER TILES



Use the fan to reveal the immortal. The point of this game is stepping on tiles one through eight in order. Use the tiles marked with S to get to the numbered tiles. Step on the wrong one and you fail.

HANA'S IMMORTAL FIGHT



The only way to beat this evil fiend is through hand to hand attacks. Good Luck!

DISC 3

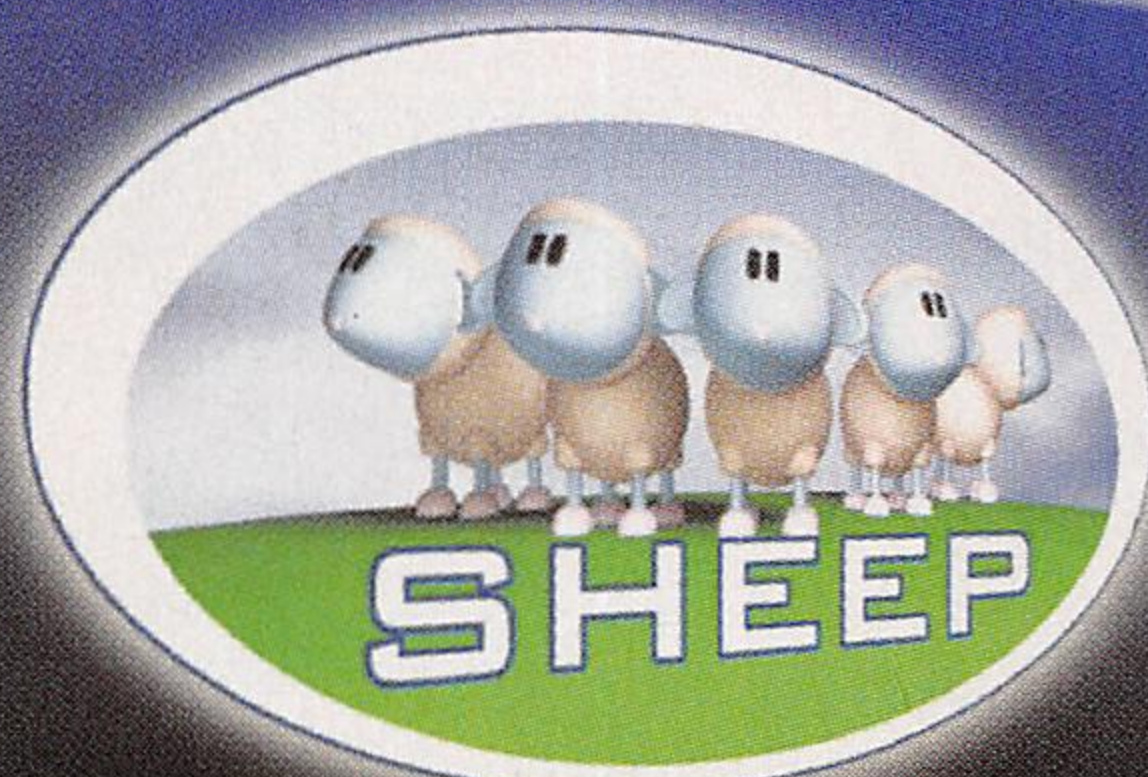
THE FINAL BOSS



Shoot the left Rain. The boss is vulnerable depending on his color. If he is blue, use the Tazar; if he is red, use the Flamethrower, and if he is Green, use the EMP weapon. When you knock it down, use the vial on the monster. Otherwise, you'll fight it again.

on the next edition ...

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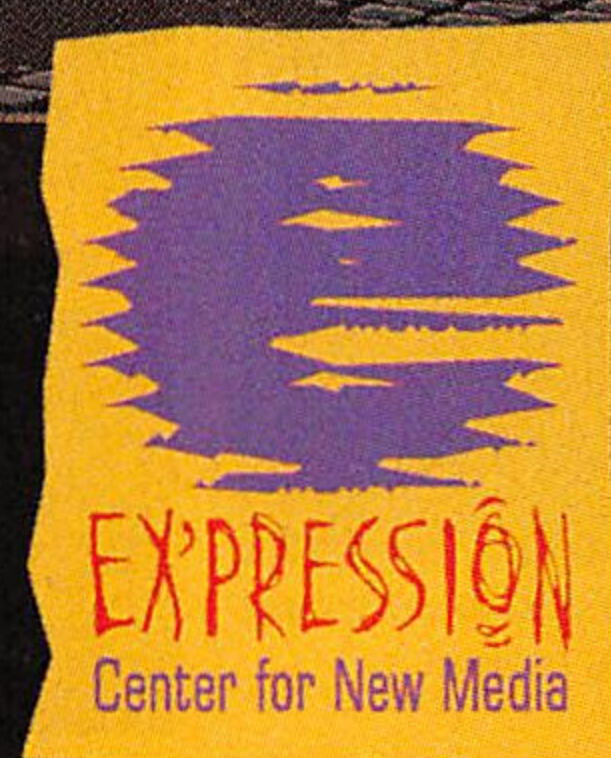
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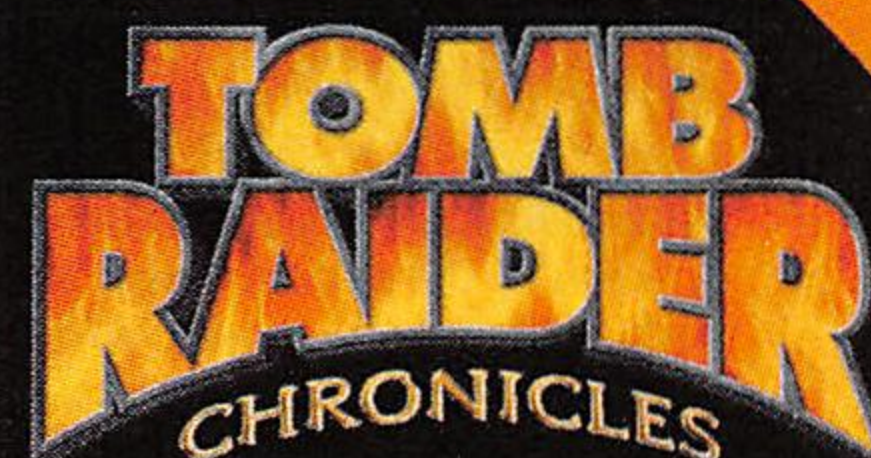
www.bandai.com



www.won.net



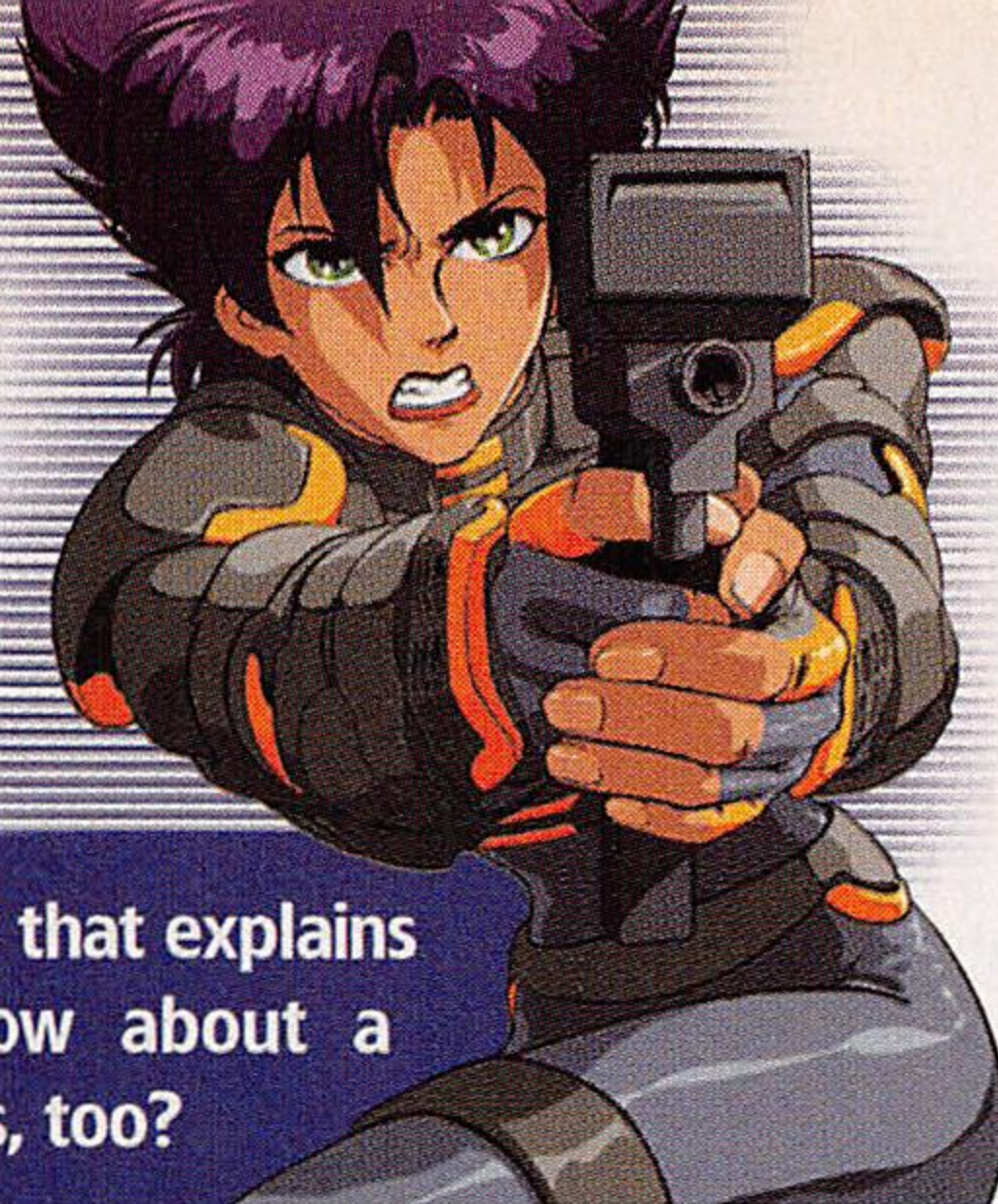
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ONI

Tips And Moves



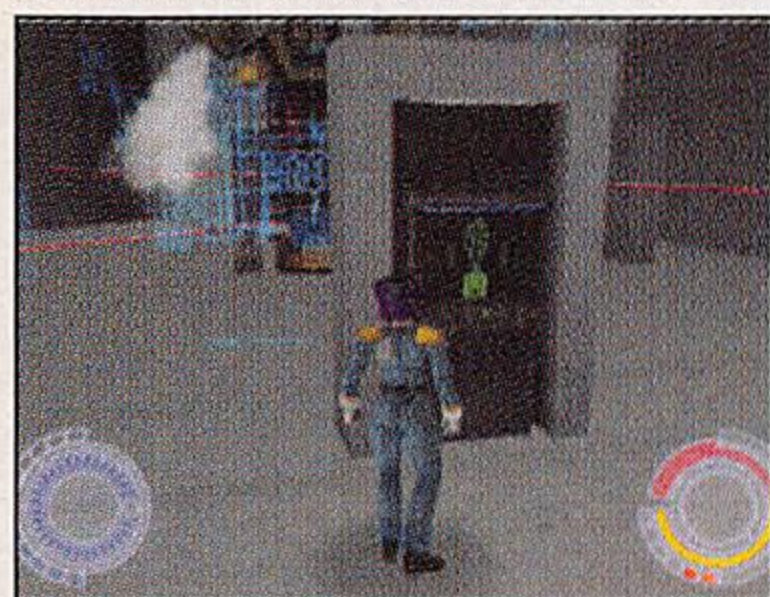
What could be better than a strategy that explains how to beat every mission? How about a strategy that explains all the moves, too?

MISSION 1

You shouldn't have too much trouble here. Practice and get used to the interface.

MISSION 2

The Brain



Flip the set of switches three times. This should be easy up until you must complete the final set. As soon as the lasers pass the first part of the terminal in front of you, begin running. If you don't mess up, you should just make it to each terminal safely.

MISSION 3

Barabas (first and second encounter)

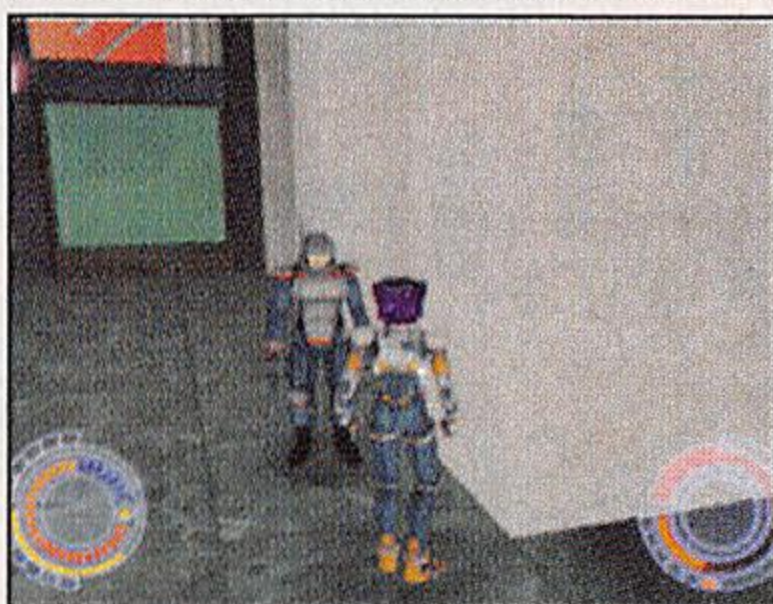


Try to knock his gun out of his hand. Once this is done, stay

in front of the gun to prevent him from having access to it. Finally, be sure to attack high and low to make it harder for him to block. For the second encounter, try to find and use the Wave Motion Cannon.

MISSION 4

Bio Research Lab

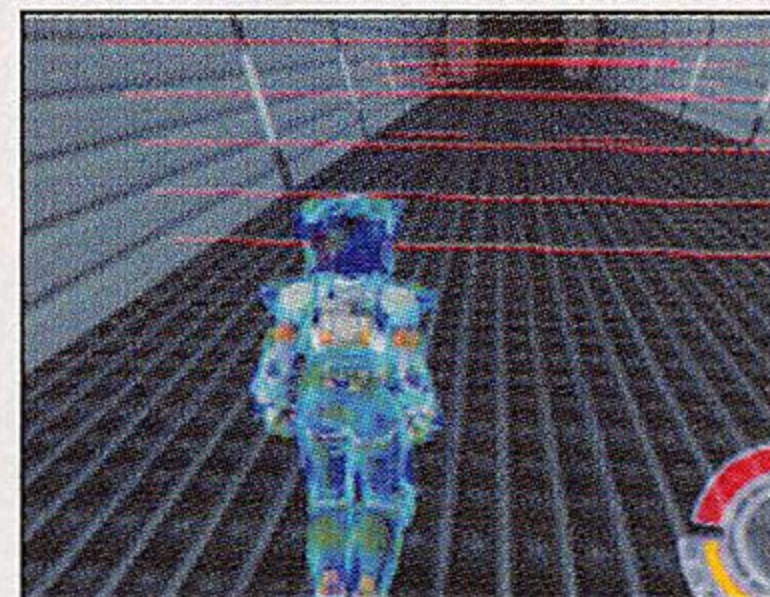


This level is extremely difficult. Be sure to talk to all of the guards to receive the extra energy and power up. Start at the bottom (the room opposite from where you began), and work your way up. Be careful; try to fight only one guard at a time. If you feel an ambush coming, retreat. Also remember that you have your team in this level, so let them help you out; and when they die, get their weapons. The next part is difficult as well. Remain in the top room and try to draw guards into the room one at a time. When fighting these guards, position yourself at an angle in front of the doorway. Try to knock

them off the platforms. Once you've accomplished this, unlock the doors at the bottom by flicking a switch under the stairs. Instead of trying to jump the slime, go up a level and cross the platform to the other side. Now just fall in front of the door.

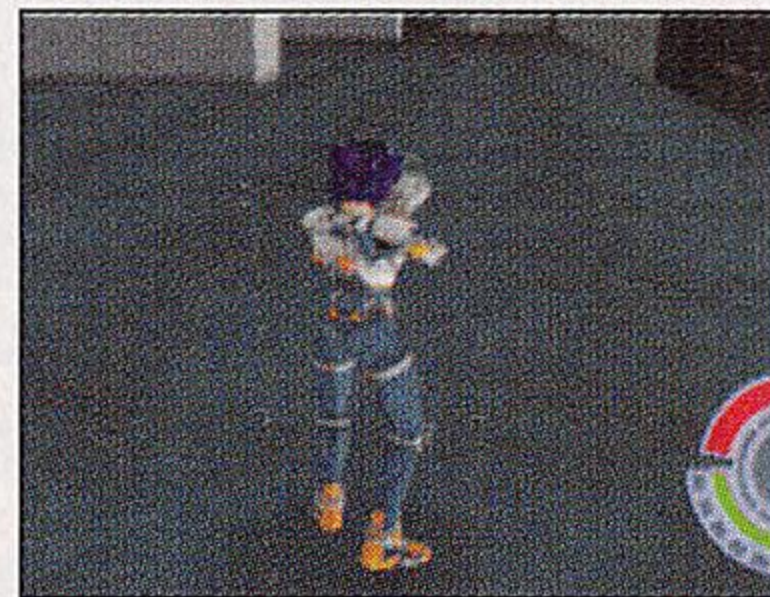
MISSION 5

Laser Room



Don't mess with any of the computers; just make your way through the lasers. If you can manage to get 2/3 of the way through, just run through everything and you should be able to avoid most of the gas that is triggered.

Roof Tops



This part of the game is long, and there are very few Hypos.

So be patient and try to fight one enemy at a time, just as you did at the Bio Research Lab. When you get off the roof, be sure to turn left down the alley and help your friends. They'll reward you well.

Hangar Roof

This is another tough spot. Try to knock the enemies off



the ledges as much as possible; this will make fighting much easier.

MISSION 6

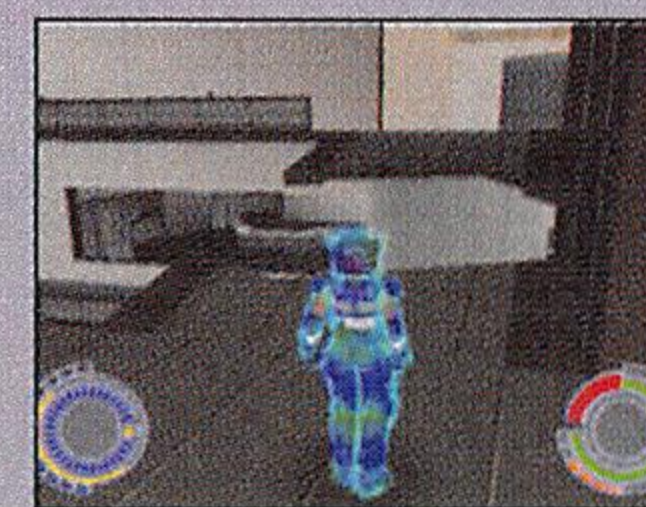
Garage

A good trick to remember is to use the cars as a shield from enemy fire. Run around them until the enemy has used up the clip. Also, once you leave the garage, practically every corner will bring lots of enemies, so try to take things as slow as possible.



Destroyed Platform

Take cover in the rooms and try to fight enemies as they enter. At the top, position yourself on the right side of the hole. Dash and then jump, and you should just make it. At the next destroyed platform, kill the guy and do the dash jump.



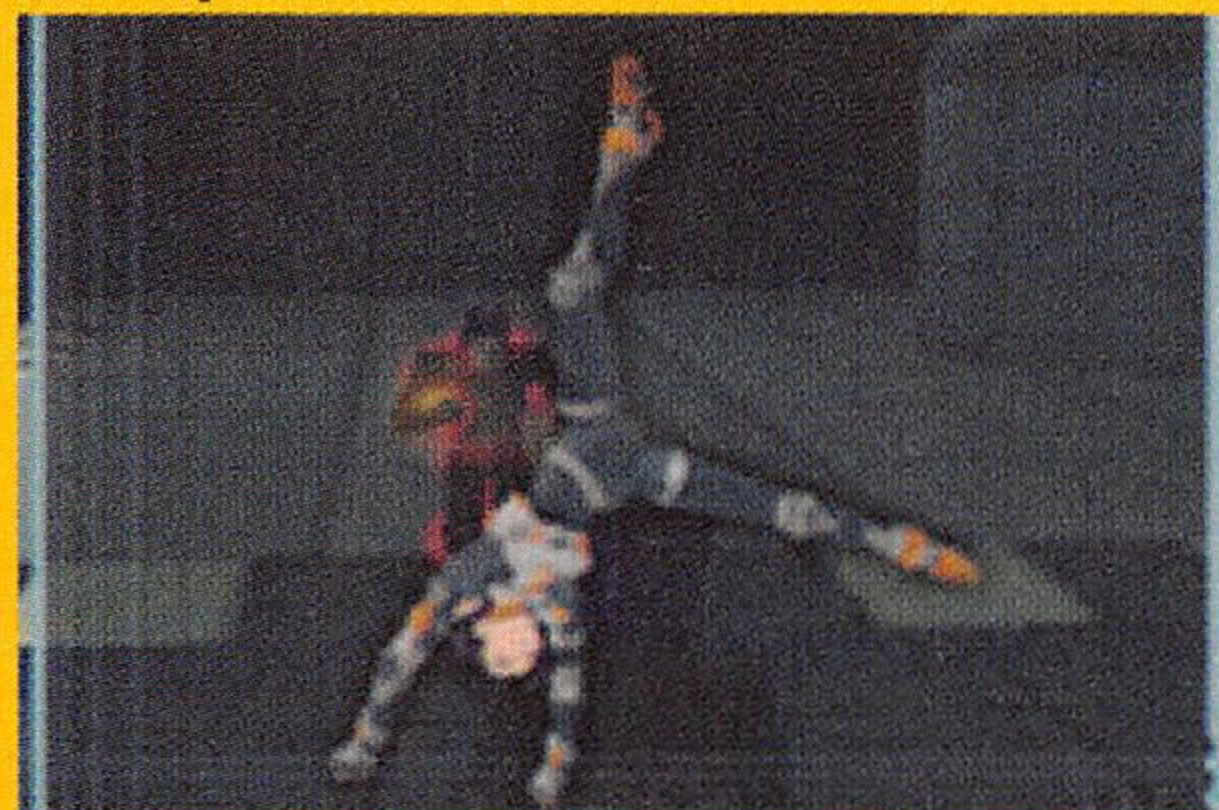
Red Room

After you cut the elevator cable, you'll enter a red room. To avoid getting hit by the guy above, go to the right and turn around. In the corner you'll find a cloaking device.



MOVES LIST

1. Escape Moves



▲ Some of the special moves are imperative to learning such as the escape moves, while others, such as Disarm, are somewhat useless.

2. Jump Flip



4. Throw



6. Sledgehammer Heel



8. Disarm



3. Slide



5. Running Throw



7. Block

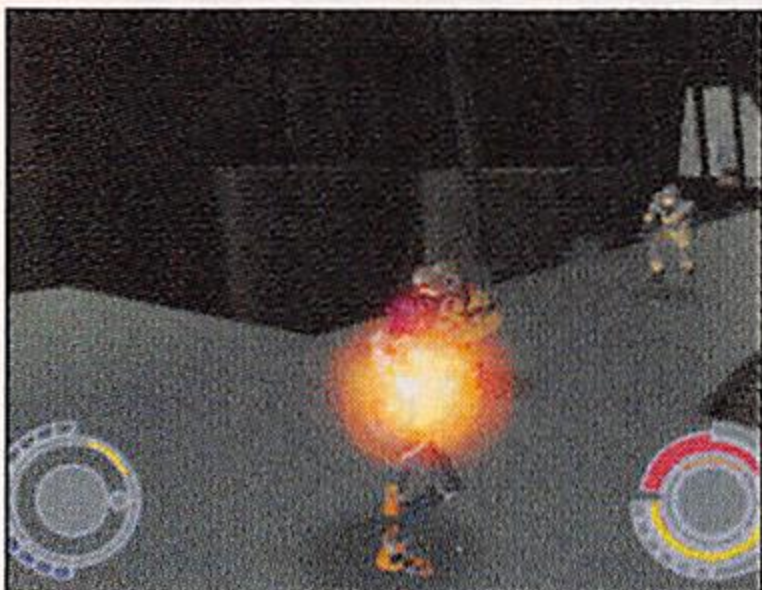


9. Backbreaker



MISSION 7

Fighting on Top



Obviously, you'll want to focus your fighting strategy on knocking the guys off of the bridge.

MISSION 8

The Detonation



Run up the stairs and go through the door to the right and you should be safe.

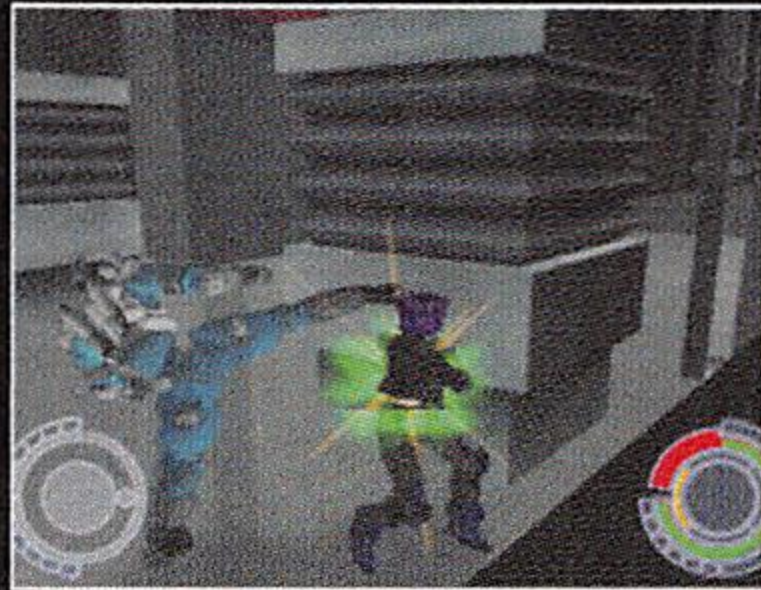
Electric Pipes



As soon as the pipe is turned off, dash on top of the pipe. If you waste no time, you'll just reach the doorway.

MISSION 10

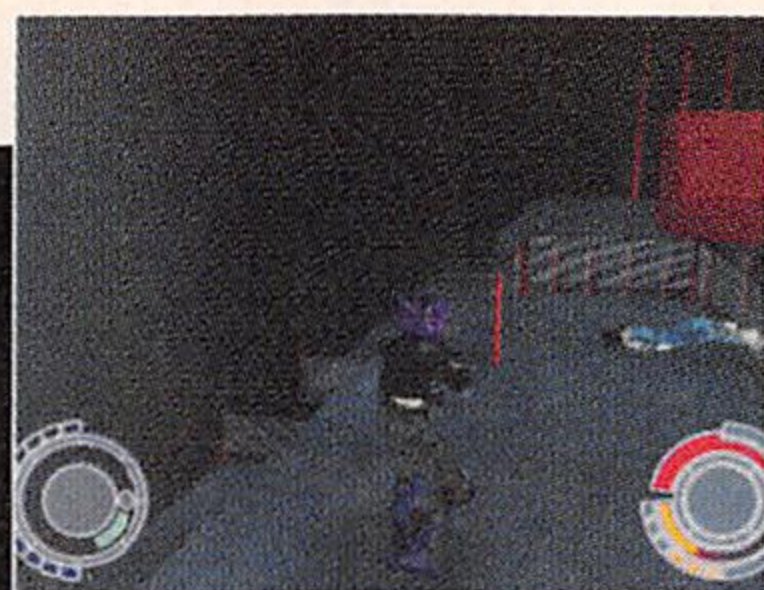
The Roof Tops



Remain behind the metal fans as you fight to avoid enemy fire from other roof tops. Be careful not to fall, and jump when enemies have expended their ammo, or while they reload.

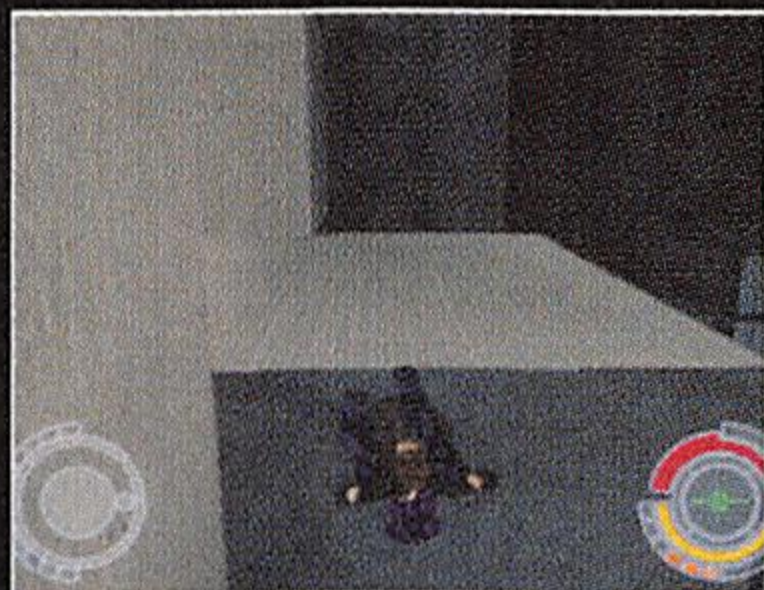
The Roof Tops II

Go up the stairs and just to your right, you'll see an opening in the fence. Jump from here. Be careful not to alert the enemy on the next roof top. Finally, be extremely



careful of standing near an edge. There are snipers all over the place that will shoot you off of the buildings.

Rooftop Flipping



To make this frustrating little jump, just jump and crouch to do a jump flip. The key here is jumping just before you hit the apex (this bit of info was discovered courtesy of Bill's sug-

gestion). However, before you do the jump, try to lure the guard over who is walking around above. When he comes, jump kick him till he is dead. This will help since there will be two other enemies to fight.

Mukade



Try to avoid blocking his moves, and dodge them instead. The key is to stick and move; when he makes a mistake, attack him. When he shoots red missiles at you, just run around and dodge them.

MISSION 12 AND 13

BOSS

Nothing especially new; just find and flip some more boring switches.

MISSION 14

Snipers and Weapons

Try to fight inside of the tents to



avoid enemy fire from the towers. Also, check behind machinery and on top of crates to find weapons.

MISSION 15

Muro



Let your allies help you out with the

other enemies. If you find yourself being attacked by many guards, take them out first, and then go back to Muro. For fighting Muro, try to sweep him a lot, and change it up with throws. If you see an enemy with a weapon, immediately get it and attack Muro with it.



Hopefully you'll have a Phase Stream Projector to beat Mukade's cronies. Just beat these enemies and you will have completed the level.

MISSION 11

Muro 1



Considering he's suppose to be a tough guy, it's ironic that you can easily take him out by continually sweeping him!

Griffin



Take out the guards first, and then deal with Griffin. However, try to keep the stunner out of Griffin's hands; this makes things a little difficult. Also, just to the left,

behind a pillar next to the wall, you'll find a Phase Cloak.

Mai (yourself)



She is very difficult. However, you can again sweep your way to victory against her.

MISSION 9

Fighting



By now you should be a master of fighting, so I'll only say it once more. Simply lure one enemy at a time, if you can, and kill them as quickly as possible.

The Lasers

Make your way past all of the



lasers on the upper floors, but be extremely careful not

to trigger any of them, since you'll die in a matter of seconds. You can skip all of the doors. Make your way to the top floor, where you'll find the ninja in the last room on the left.

Mukade

10. Triple-Hit Haymaker



▲ The more advanced moves will be necessary to learn in later levels. Without them you'll die quickly.

11. Spinning Sidekick



13. Crescent Moon Kick



15. Running Lariat



17. Twisted Kick



12. Willow Kick



14. Devil Spin Kick



16. Rising Fury Punch



18. Stepping Disarm



ATV OFFROAD FURY

Tricks, Traps And Tracks



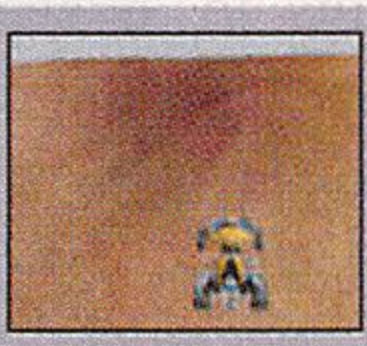
here's a lot more to racing these four-wheeled furies than just going fast. To win, you'll need to perform lots of different tricks, also!

STUNT CONTROLS

(Default Settings)

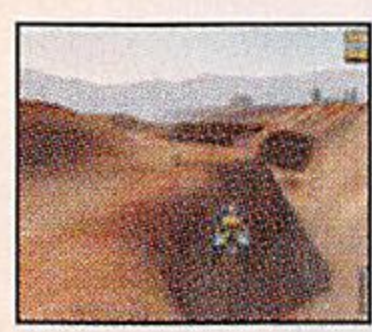
Hart Attack

⊙ + Left analog stick Up



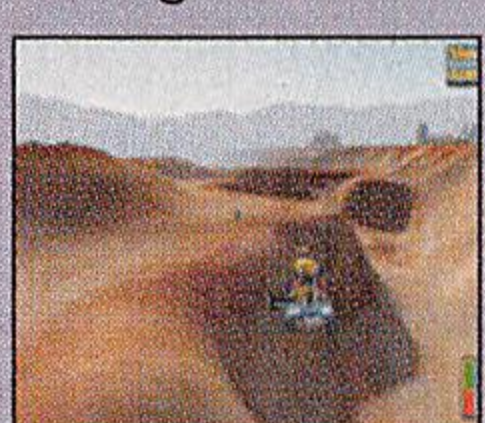
Tail Grab

⊙ + Left analog stick Down



Double Can Can

⊙ + Left analog stick Left



Airwalk

⊙ + Left analog stick Right



Cordova

⊙ + Left analog stick Up-Right



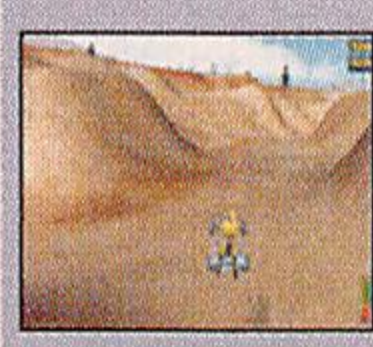
Saran Wrap

⊙ + Left analog stick Down-Right



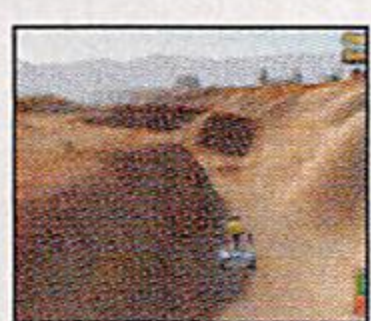
Superman

⊙ + Left analog stick Down-Left



Cliff Hanger

⊙ + Left analog stick Up-Left



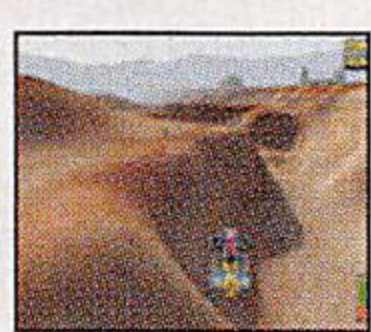
Heel Clicker

⊙ + Left analog stick Up



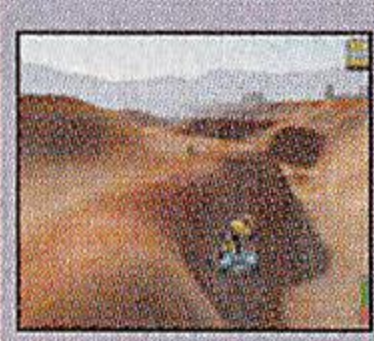
Lazy Boy

⊙ + Left analog stick Down



Nac Nac

⊙ + Left analog stick Left



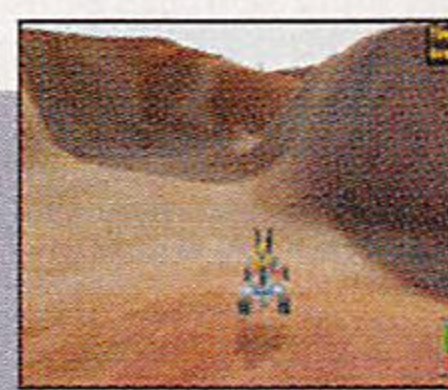
Split X

⊙ + Left analog stick Right



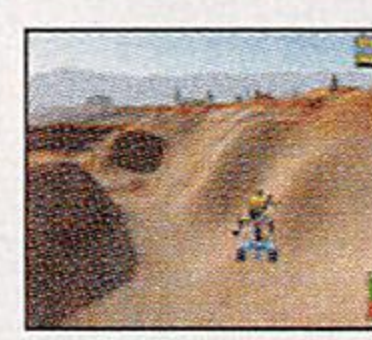
Bar Hop

⊙ + Left analog stick Up-Right



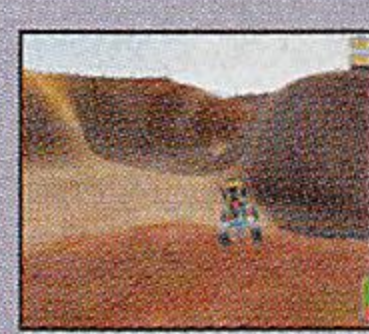
Scissors

⊙ + Left analog stick Down-Left



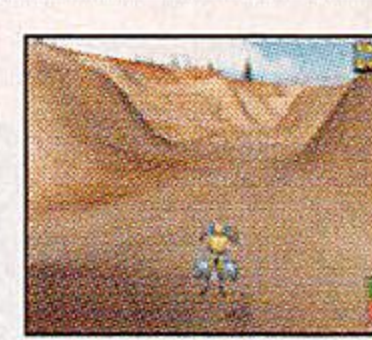
Bar Kneel

⊙ + Left analog stick Up-Left



Seat Grab

⊙ + Left analog stick Down-Right



Note: The D-Pad can also be used for all the above button/direction combinations if you prefer.

ATV OFFROAD FURY BIKES

These ATVs as a whole offer good acceleration and a good top speed. However, their stability and traction vary. These bikes aren't for novices.

Havoc Performer

Havoc Milan

Havoc Razor

Havoc Siege



The Ravage series offers a wide variety of ATV types. Overall, they are good all around ATVs.

Ravage Talon

Ravage Hawk

Ravage Eagle

Ravage DCX

Ravage 1000



These are good ATVs for beginners, as well as good all around vehicles.

Honda FourTrax 300EX

Honda FourTrax 400EX



The Kawasaki line is a stable ATV, which makes it useful in freestyle mode.

Kawasaki Lakota Sport
Kawasaki Mojave



We can only recommend these for the absolute expert. If you're on a track with lots of turns go for the 400 version with the acceleration. If you're in an open space the 500 model is best, since it has a high top speed.

Polaris Scrambler 400
Polaris Scrambler 500



If you're a first time player, you may want to try these ATVs. Although they are a little weak, they'll help you get into the game.

Yamaha Banshee
Yamaha Blaster
Yamaha Warrior



TRACKS

Here is the complete list of tracks. To open them, you simply need to earn a certain number of points.

Enduro/ Freestyle Stunt	Maxxis Nationals	Stadium Supercross
 ▲ The freestyle courses are extremely huge, so go out and explore for large, open areas with lots of jumps to score points as quickly as possible.	 ▲ Of course there are a variety of tracks you'll have to race on, but be sure to note that they all have useful little shortcuts that you'll need to find.	 ▲ In order to be successful here, you'll have to master the art of jumping high and landing somewhat softly. It's not as easy as it looks...
Canyon Country Harp Valley Yardley Station Fort Roberts Crater Park	Presidio Park Chateau Halifax Yucatan Dunes Lexington Trail Badlands Somer's Raceway Manitoba Mills Kodiak Pipeline Salem's Backlot Red Rocks Tamarac Ranch	Chesapeake Syracuse Wilkes-Barre Latrobe Tupelo Santa Fe Menifee

OTHER USEFUL RACING TIPS

The tutorial is okay, but there are a number of other facets that we think could use a little explaining.

1. When jumping, you only need to hold back for a half second before the jump bar turns green. Now just press forward and you should be flying high.



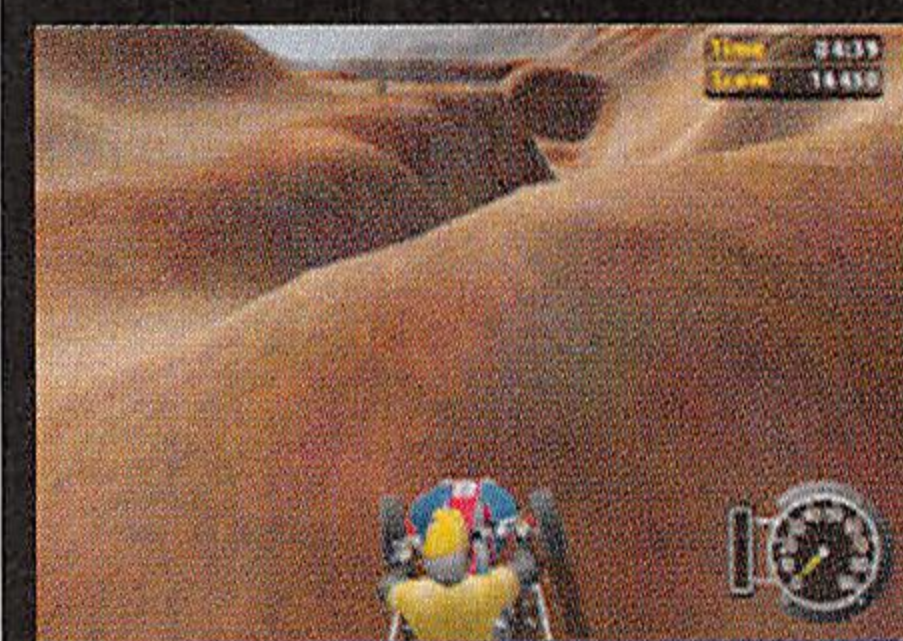
▲ Jumping high all of the time may not be prudent. Base the jump on where you are going to land.

2. Landing is an art in of itself. Typically, you should try to land at the bottom of a jump. If you land on top you will lose a ton of speed. However, if you do happen to land on the top of a hill or jump, just charge up to jump it and you'll lose less speed.



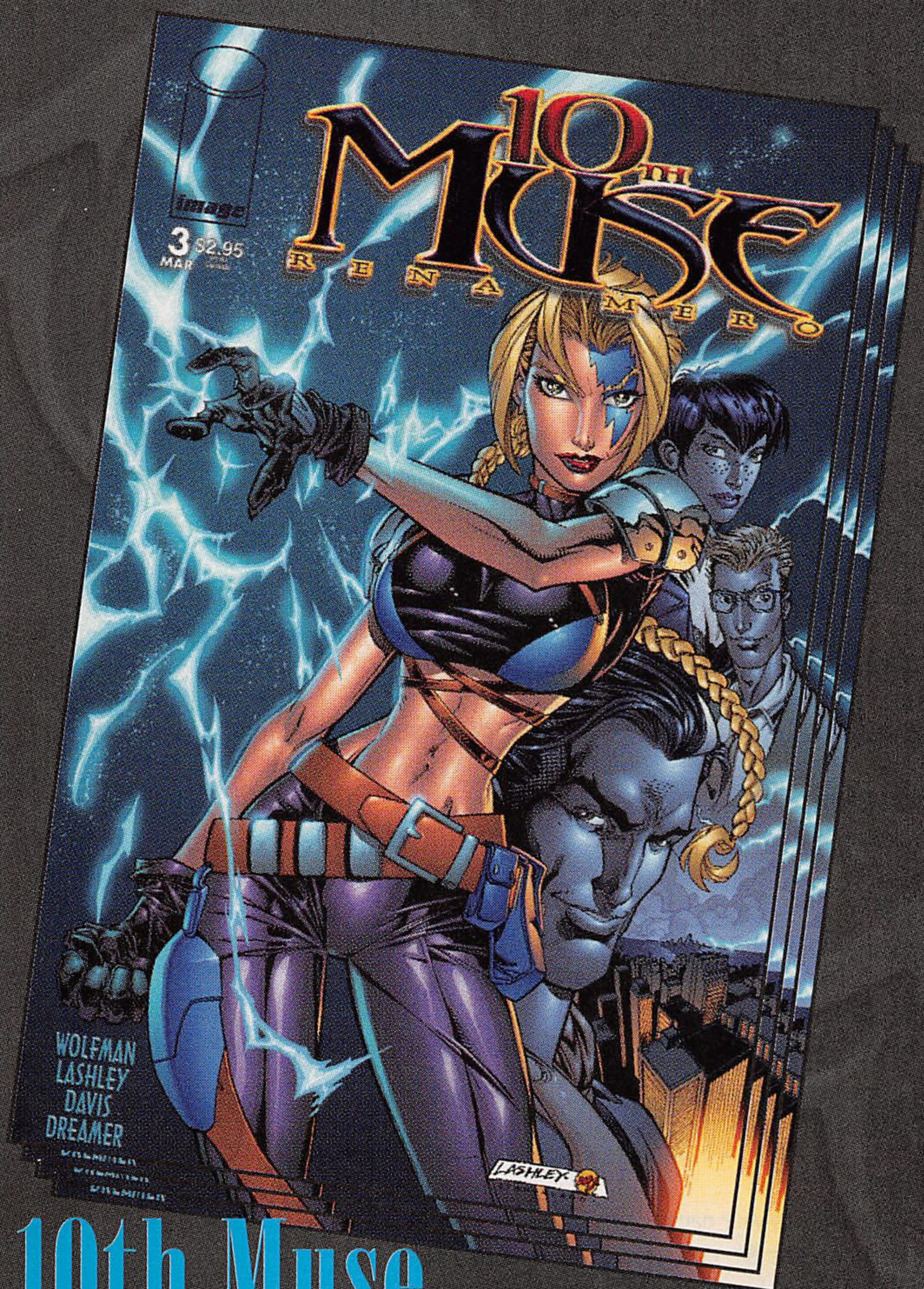
▲ Don't do this. I'm going to land on the top of the hill. If you do, though, just follow the strategy.

3. The tricks feel a bit sluggish, so pulling off many can be difficult. Try to conserve your time by concentrating on big jumps and forming combination tricks. To do this, you'll need to start performing tricks as early as possible.



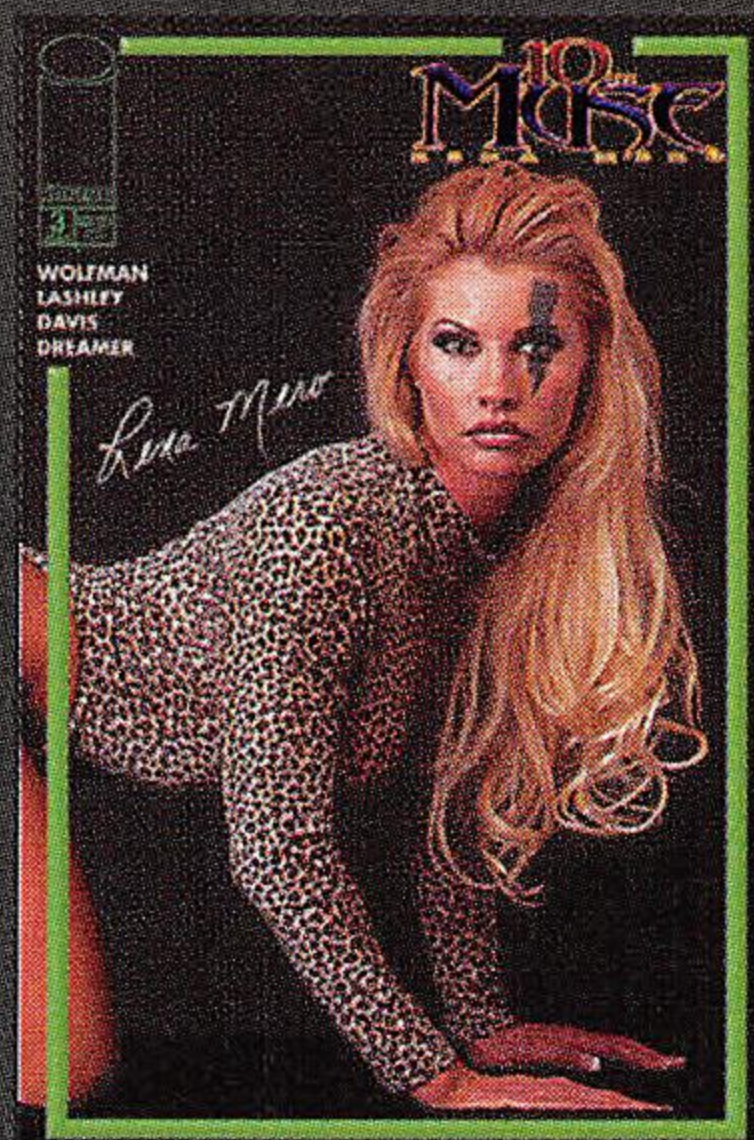
▲ A cliff this high up should give you enough time to pull off a couple of tricks.

Two Exciting New Titles From Image Comics!



**10th Muse
Issue #3 Coming in March!**
From Marv Wolfman and Ken Lashley

Featuring the
Former WWF
Female Champion
Rena Mero



She's the myth you'll want to believe in...
Available at comic book stores and Tower Records locations



www.tidalwavestudios.com



**The Dollz
Beginning This April!**
From Thomas Sniegowski
and Randy Green
(WITCHBLADE)

Collect all Five Covers!



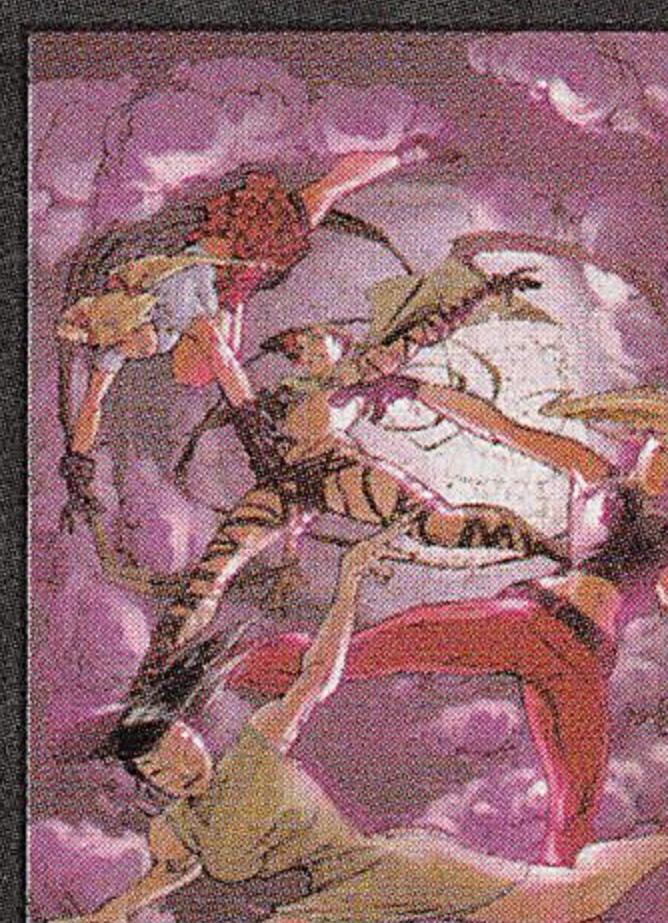
Randy Green
Dynamic Forces Cover



Ale Garza
(EVE PROTECTOR)



Mike Wieringo
(TELLOS)



Keron Grant
(IRON MAN)

Playtime is Over!



CODES

This month's hottest cheats

KENGO: MASTER OF BUSHIDO

PLAY AS THE STUDENT

At the character select screen, hold **L1** + **R1** and hit **X** to make your selection. Instead of fighting as the teacher, you will be the student, which is indicated next to your name as you fight.

READY TO RUMBLE BOXING: ROUND 2

UNLOCK ALL CHARACTERS

At the Character select screen press:

← ← → R2 ← → → R1 R1 R2

The question mark in the lower-right corner is the "Random Fighter" marker. Before pressing **q** to confirm your choice, press the **Ⓢ** to change their costumes. You will have access to every costume, including the Holiday outfits.

WILD WILD RACING

BETTER ENGINE

Successfully complete Time Attack mode to unlock a better engine.

QUICK START

When "1" appears during the countdown, press **X** to accelerate.

TOP GEAR DARE DEVIL

When in the Club house ON TV SCREEN:

UNLOCK ALL CITIES

L1 L1 R1

UNLOCK ALL BONUS LEVELS

L1 R1 L2 R2

WIN SINGLE PLAYER GAME

L2 R2 L1 R1

ONI

FIRST CODES

During the game press **SELECT**. Move the cursor to the Help icon. First, input

L2 L1 L2 Ⓢ Ⓢ, followed by:

START Ⓢ Ⓢ START - Big Head

L3 R3 Ⓢ Ⓢ - Mini Me

WWF SMACKDOWN 2: KNOW YOUR ROLE

225 ABILITY POINTS

To get 225 ability points for your created wrestler, set the following characteristics:

Weak Neck

Weak Waist

Weak Elbow

Weak Knee

The Iron King

DANGER GIRL

UNLOCK LEVEL SELECT AND CHEAT MENU

At the main menu press:

L1 R2 R1 Ⓢ Ⓢ Ⓢ

Next press and hold:

L1 + L2 + R1 + R2

This will unlock the level select menu. Choose your level. During the game, pause the game and select the Cheat option. This

reveals a list of cheats that can be accessed through collecting icons.

MICRO MANIACS RACING

SECRET OPTIONS CHEATS

At the main menu select Options, choose Secret Options. Once you are at this screen, press and hold **SELECT** while you enter the following codes.

ALL TRACKS UNLOCKED

△ ○ ○ △ ↓ ↑ ↑ ↓

INFINITE POWER-UPS

○ × △ Ⓢ ← × Ⓢ Ⓢ Ⓢ ← ○ ↑ △

TOUGH GUYS

Ⓢ × Ⓢ Ⓢ Ⓢ ↑ Ⓢ ↓ ↑ ↓ × Ⓢ

TANKS MODE

(Use **L1** **L2** or **R2** to fire your weapons.)

↓ ↑ Ⓢ △ ○ △ ← △

MOTION BLUR

△ ○ → △ ↑ → ○ ↑ Ⓢ

SLOW AI

↑ ← △ → △ ○ △ Ⓢ ↑ △ ←

ULTIMATE AI

○ ↑ △ ○ ← △ Ⓢ Ⓢ × ↓

SPEC OPS

GOD MODE

Enter ROCKSTAR as your name when you start the game. Press **START** during gameplay. You can now switch Invulnerability on and off from the pause menu.

ENABLE CHEATS

Pause, then hold **R1** + **R2** + **L1** + **L2** and input the desired code:

INVINCIBILITY

× △ Ⓢ ○

ALL LEVELS AND WORLDS

△ ○ ○ Ⓢ

LEVEL SKIP

○ Ⓢ × ×

UNLIMITED AMMO

○ Ⓢ △ ×

REFILL TEAM HEALTH

△ △ × ×

REFILL TEAM AMMO

× × △ △

FIRST SPECIAL WEAPON

△ × × ×

SECOND SPECIAL WEAPON

× × × △

HEAVY WEAPON

△ × Ⓢ Ⓢ

ROCKET BOOTS

△ Ⓢ Ⓢ △

JETPACK

Ⓢ Ⓢ △ △

ALL CRATES POWERED UP

○ × × ○

INSTANT SHAPE BUILDING

Ⓢ Ⓢ Ⓢ ○

BIG FEET

△ Ⓢ Ⓢ ×

BIG GUNS

△ ○ ○ △

BASE INDESTRUCTABLE

× △ △ ×

EASY GUN BUILD

○ ○ × ×

GAMESHARK CODES

PS2

SSX

(M) Must Be On..... Ec8f2a641456e60a
Monster Score..... 1c2cd61817e9C70c

DOA2

(M) Must Be On..... ecbec4ac1456e60a
Infinite Health P2..... 4cdf44c01456e6b9
1 Hit K.O. P1..... 4cdf44581456e7a6
1 Hit K.O. P2..... 4cdf44c01456e7a6
Infinite Health P1..... 4cdf44581456e6b9

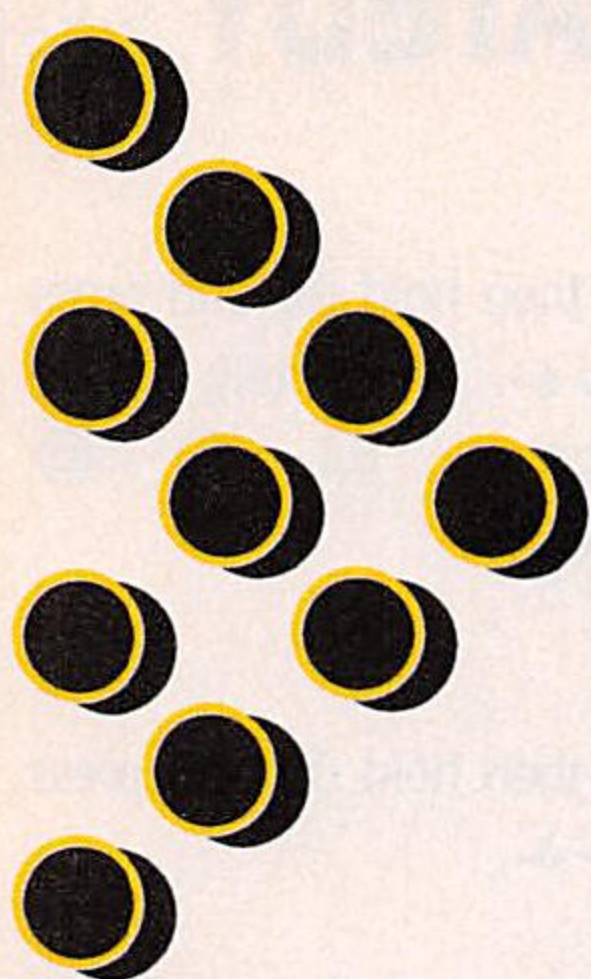
SILENT SCOPE

(M) Must Be On..... ec8d4b1c1456e79b
Unlimited Time..... 4Cbceb761456e775
No Reload
This code will not allow you to break the B.P. Glass at the end of the game. The glass will only break when you have 1 round left in the clip.
No Reload..... 4cbcea461456e7a4
Infinite Health..... 4cbceb201456e637
4cbceb1e1456e637

READY TO RUMBLE BOXING: ROUND 2

(M) Must Be On..... ec87f5201456e60a
Infinite Health P1..... 4c896bc81456e781
Quick Recovery P1..... 4c896bcc1456e781
Infinite Health P2..... 4c8a92381456e781
Quick Recovery P2..... 4c8a923c1456e781
P1 1-Hit K.O..... 4c896bc81456e7a6
P1 No Stamina..... 4c896bcc1456e7a5
P2 1-Hit K.O..... 4c8a92381456e7a6

P2 No Stamina..... 4c8a923c1456e7a5
All Characters Unlocked..... 4c8940341456e7a8
4c8940381456e7a8
4c89403c1456e7a8
4c8940401456e7a8
4c8940441456e7a8
4c8940481456e7a8
4c89404c1456e7a8
4c8940501456e7a8
4c8940541456e7a8
4c8940581456e7a8
4c89405c1456e7a8
Have Max Cash..... 4c8c0c001456B00c
Have Max Strength..... 4c8c0c0214562b8f
Have Max Stamina..... 4c8c0c0614562b8f
Have Max Endurance..... 4c8c0c0a14562b8f
Have Max Dexterity..... 4c8c0c0e14562b8f
Have Max Experience..... 4c8c0c1214562b8f



LETTERS

The answer to your question is just a letter or an e-mail away

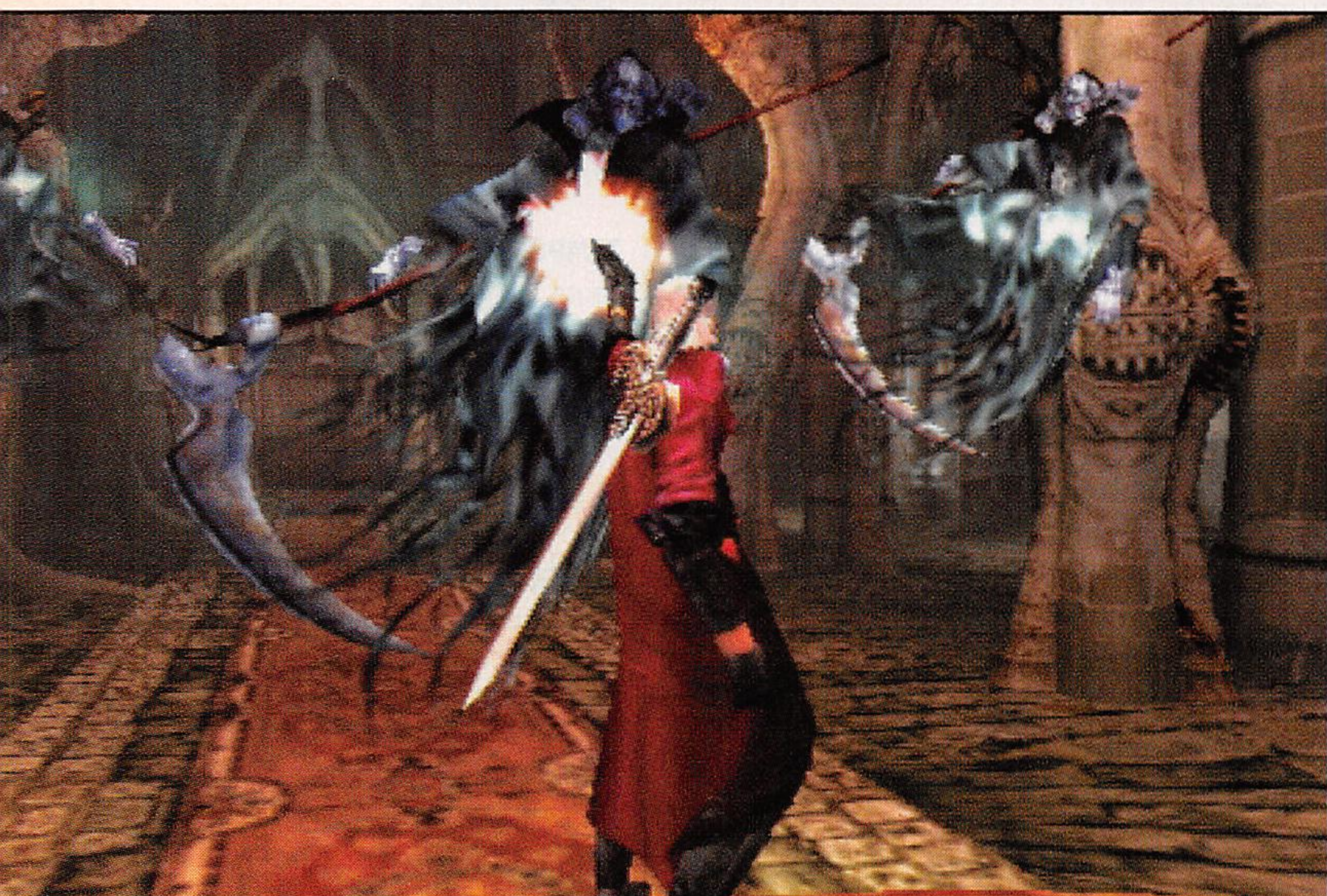


PSM Letters
c/o Imagine Media

150 North Hill Drive
Brisbane, CA, 94005 USA



E-mail:
psm@imaginemedia.com.



▲ Not only is *Devil May Cry* one kick-ass game, but its lead character, Dante, has the girls going wild!

RANDY'S TIP OF THE MONTH:

"I'll let you in on a secret: Before you play a game, go to the Options screen, turn the music all the way down and the sound effects all the way up — you'll hear the voices of the game designers whispering tips to you while you play."

We Know What Girls Want

What I want to say is that, through all my years of gaming, I have been able to spot the excellent material from the duds, and the newest Capcom game, *Devil May Cry*, looks like the one we gamer chicks have been waiting for. Trust me girls, I know what I'm talking about. DEMON WITH FIREARMS — need I say more? Capcom had better not screw this one up. Here are what I believe to be the only ways that Capcom could screw up this gem of a concept: 1. Weakling adversaries: A hero is only as good as the villain he faces, 2. A short ending sequence: I'm sure I'm not the only gamer who feels that way, and 3. The game is released while all gamers are broke: We all know the feeling. This

looks, but I'm still equally excited about this hot new Capcom title. And don't worry, I don't think Capcom will screw it up!

Say What?

I heard from a store representative that SVCDs will not operate in a PlayStation 2 system. Why is that the case, and can that ever be changed? What about MPEGs being played from CDRs?

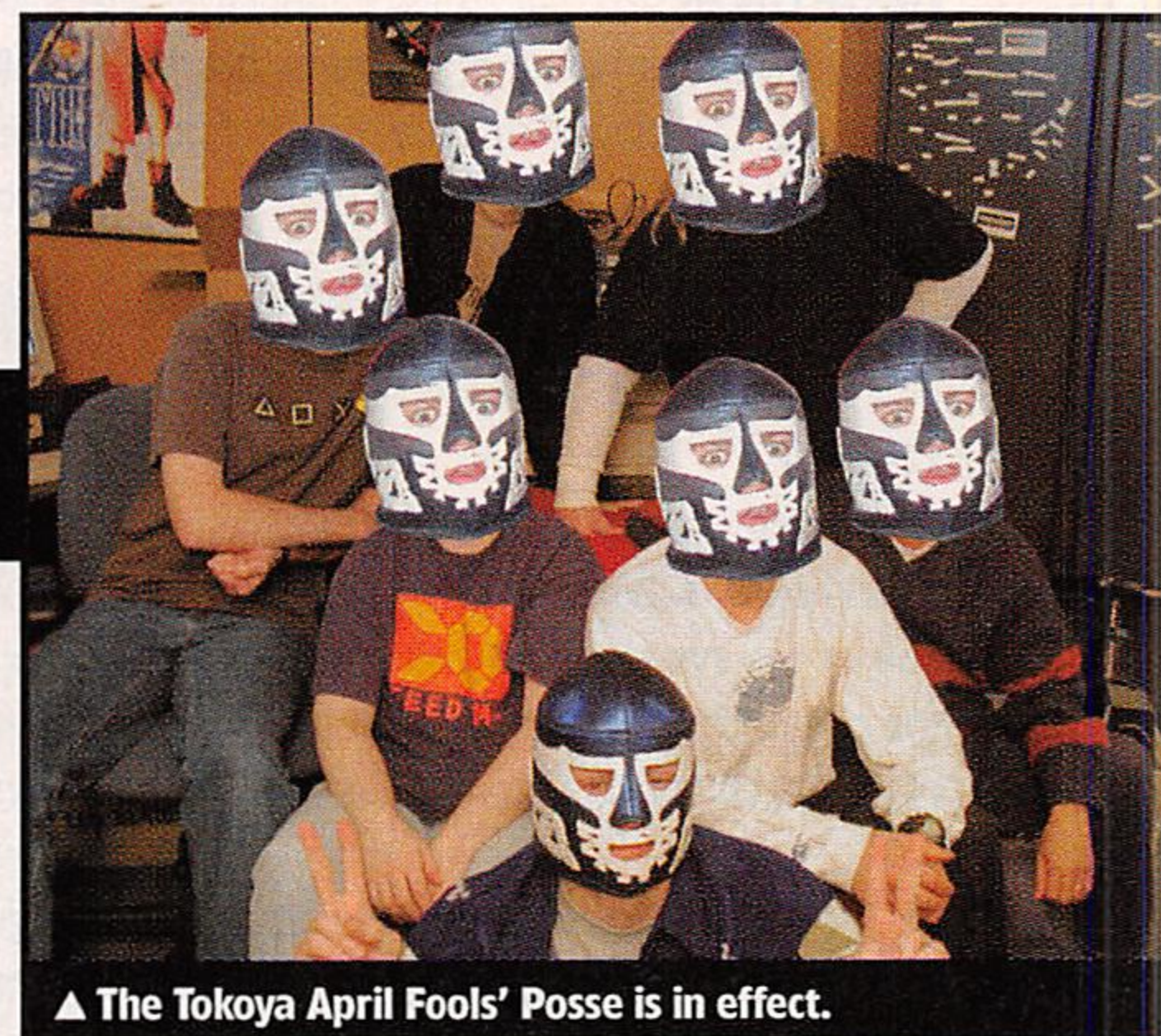
Barry, BSM222@email.com

STEVE: To be honest, I don't even know what SVCDs are. If you are talking about standard VCDs, then the answer is "no". The PS2

is the game we've all been waiting for. Capcom had better not make me a liar. P.S. To all the other gamer chicks out there: Dante is mine! I saw him first!

GamerWoman3D,
gamerwoman3d@z.net

CHRIS: Wow, such a strong reaction to *Devil May Cry* already! Could it be that Dante is actually... a HUNK? Do game grrls find him.... DREAMY? Well, I'm not one to judge another guy's



▲ The Tokoya April Fools' Posse is in effect.

won't play them right now. However, Sony might release future drivers that allow for it. As for MPEGs, there's no real way to play them because there's no interface to select them. Again, that could change in the future.

Time For The Cleansing

I bought my PS2 on launch day and noticed that it has a fan on the back and a grill on the front which allows air to flow through the system. But air isn't the only thing flowing through. Lots of dust is, too. I noticed also lots of dust stuck on the fan. Are all these particles going to jack up my system? And is there a way to clean or avoid this?

René, Address Withheld

RANDY: While you might not be able to eliminate the cause of the dust build-up (unless you keep your house as tidy as a high-tech chip-making factory) you can lessen its effects. The best way to do this is to pick up a can of compressed air at a computer or electronics shop and use it to blow the dust off the PS2's motherboard. To do this, you have to aim the straw-like attachment through the air inlet grille on the front of the system, which will cause the dust to blow out the fan outlet. You can also use the air to blow dust out of and off the fan itself if that's

LINK-UP

Send your linkup e-mails to psm@imaginemedia.com, with "Link up" in the subject line.

► Alex Mello, age 13

madeinsanebydancingbears@yahoo.com

Favorite Genres: RPGs, Action, Adventure, Shooters

Favorite Games: FF7, Silent Scope, Vagrant Story, Medal Of Honor,

Suikoden2 Metal Gear Solid

Quote: "Life it seems, will fade away, Drifting further every day, Getting lost with in myself, Nothing matters, no one else" - Metallica.

► Brad Belanger, age 26

djmadbrad@aol.com

Favorite Genres: Sports, RPG, PS2!!!

Favorite Games: EA Live 2000, FF VIII, Twisted Metal II, Metal Gear Solid, WWF Smackdown...

Quote: "I don't try anything, I just do it. Wanna try me?"

► Michael S., age 16

E-mail: duo_madan@hotmail.com

Favorite Genres: RPG, Mech Combat, Action/Adventure, Simulation

Favorite Games: Armored Core, Xenogears, Final Fantasy 7, and more

Quote: "Peace?! Peace?!?! Don't ever bring issues of 'peace' up to me! If there is 'peace', I'll be out of a job!!!"

been getting dusty.

2D Or Not 2D?

Why does everyone want everything in 3D now? What's wrong with good old fashioned 2D? Many of us older gamers from the 8- and 16-bit days still remember the simple, enjoyable gameplay of yesteryear. I'm sure there must be at least a few people out there who agree with me. To tell you the truth, I'm one of the few physiologically inferior people who can't handle really fancy, complicated pictures. It's not fair to us! Those games that are shot from the first-person perspective give me a headache.

Nelson, Address Withheld

CHRIS: I like 3D games just fine, but I agree with you that 2D games still deserve a place in our industry. I think the problem is that too many people equate 2D with "old games". Gamers are demanding, and expect developers to constantly push the envelope. Thank goodness for the Gameboy Advance — handheld systems are the only real place to play great 2D games these days.

The Sound Of Music

I was playing *Midnight Club: Street Racing* on my PS2, and it reminded me of *Need for Speed:High Stakes* for the PC. In that game, you can listen to CDs as you play the game. Since PS2 can play CDs, would it be possible in any way to just pop a CD in the disk drive and play with the music? Now I'm not going to go try it, cause I would probably mess my system up, so I'm asking you guys to please find out — if not on *Midnight Club*, than maybe on another game. Thanks a lot!

Edward Arnold, greatone63@hotmail.com

STEVE: There aren't any games out there right now (on the PS2) that allow you to pop in a music CD. That's because most games rely on streaming data constantly. If the game CD isn't there, then you'll get a freeze or lock-up. There may be some titles, in the future, that allow for this, but don't expect that many. What most developers decide to do is include a bunch of songs and allow the player to choose which

LETTER OF THE MONTH



▲ The Dreamcast may be done for, but Sonic and his pals will always be welcome on the PlayStation 2.

I was just writing you guys for the hell of it. Unlike a lot of other videogame magazines, you definitely give all the games you review the scores they deserve. I know, I've played a lot of them. Anyway, I had a question that I really

wanted to ask you: What do you guys think about Sega and its plans to drop the Dreamcast and go software only? This upsets me, because I've always supported multiple systems (I'm simply a gamer and I don't care what system a game is on as long as it's good). I know that you guys work at a PlayStation magazine, but I would still like your opinion, since you are also hardcore gamers.

Jeff Hurley, hurleyjeff@aol.com

CHRIS: As a gamer (and not just a PlayStation fan), I couldn't be more excited about Sega putting its software on other systems. Sega has always had incredibly talented development teams, but unfortunately, the company just isn't that great when it comes to producing and marketing game consoles. Now, great games like *Jet Grind Radio* and *Crazy Taxi* will be able to reach the big audience that they deserve, and everyone will know how great Sega games are. The Dreamcast may be dead, but Sega's spirit will always continue on in its games.

ones they want to listen to.

Roll Your Own

I always liked playing RPGs and always wanted to make my own. I just had some question about RPG Maker and I thought you guys could answer them for me.

1. Are there a lot of limitations on it? Can you actually make everything, such as characters, enemies, weapons, levels, and caves?
2. Wouldn't it take up tons of space to save a whole RPG on your memory card?
3. Can you make up your own story like in *Final Fantasy*?

Jason Bateman, jasonps2@hotmail.com

TOKOYA: 1. You can't really create new weapons or items. The game just has a huge selection of them and you can choose which ones you want to use in your game.

2. It does take up a lot of space. Actually, if I

remember right, it takes up a whole memory card.

3. Yes, you can make your own storyline and dialog.

Don't Do This At Home!

I just wanted to know if bootleg CDs for any of the systems would damage the laser eye of that system. I have heard that people that make most of the bootleg CDs are using these really cheap recordable CDs that have a blue tinge to the bottom and that they make the eye of the system work harder than it should. Can you let me know if this is true? I know you guys look down on bootleg games (I only have a few) but I need to know whether I should stop. If there is truly a risk, then I won't use them any more.

Ronald (Vanguard) Rivas, Address Withheld

RANDY: That's the first I've heard of this particular rumor, but I really doubt it. There have been cases of pirated Dreamcast games ruining drives on that system, but that evidently has something to do with

GAMES WE WANT TO SEE

THE MACK

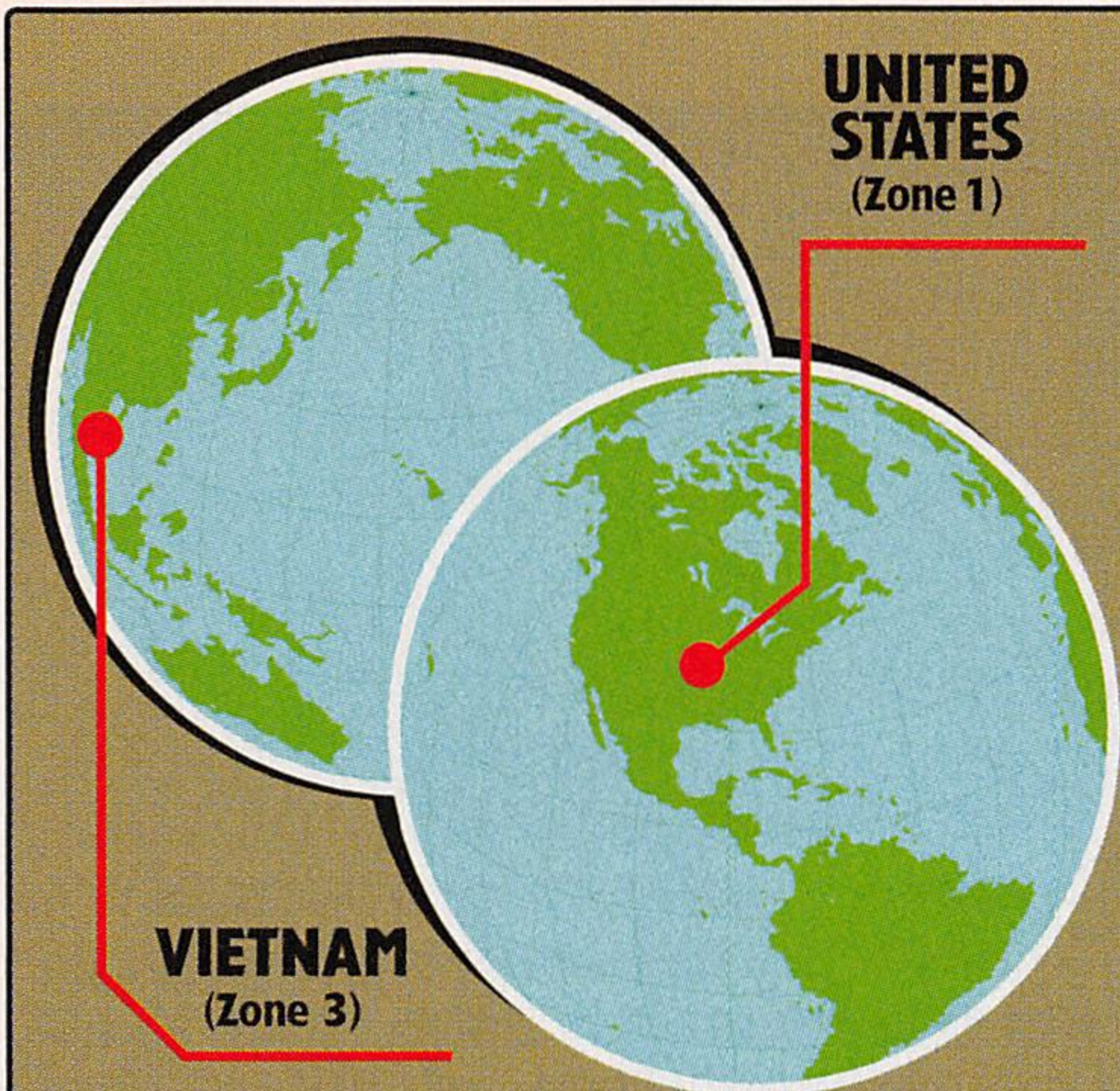
In this game, you're The Mack and everybody knows it. You simply walk across the screen from left to right while all the people you pass by give you your props. At the end of each level is a boss, some sucka wannabe that decides he wants to front on The Mack. After you plant your foot in his ass, he steps down and then he, too, must give you your props. There would even be bonus levels where you get to mack with as many fly honeys as possible until the timer runs out — but even then, you just keep on mackin'!

► **Mikey Richards**, age 13
alicerichards@home.com
Favorite Genres: RPG, Racing, Adventure, Action, Fighting
Favorite Games: *Vagrant Story*, *FF 7 + 8*, *Metal Gear Solid*, *Gran Turismo 2*
Quote: "I proudly say I have every game for Sega Genesis and ColecoVision

► **Joel**, age 14
SkateorDie78@hotmail.com
Favorite Genres: RPGs, Adventure, Action, Survival Horror, Puzzle
Favorite Games: *Wild Arms 2*, *Final Fantasy VIII*, *Resident Evil 2+3*, *The X-Files*, *Dino Crisis*, *Tony Hawk*
Quote: "Must.. Get.. Evil.. Dead.. Before.. they do!!

► **Chris Egan**, age 15
The_dark_dragon_tiamat@hotmail.co
Favorite Genres: RPG, Action, Survival Horror
Favorite Games: *Resident Evil* (all of them) *Gekido*, *Final Fantasy 5,6,7,8*, *Xenogears*, *Parasite Eve*, *Star Ocean*
Quote: "If this were a free country, I'd own it by now."

► **Joshua Postma**
Cowrider1@hotmail.com
Favorite Genres: RPG
Favorite Games: *Final Fantasy 5+6+7+8*, *Secret of Mana*, *Secret of Evermore*, *Legend of Mana*, *Lunar SSS*, *Grandstream Saga*, *Alundra*, etc..
Quote: "I am the RPG MASTER ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!"



▲ Unfortunately, Patrick, PS2 games and DVD movies can only be played on systems sold in the region they're released in.

Foreign Affairs

My cousin is coming over from Vietnam and she is bringing her new PlayStation 2 with her. I was wondering if the one she has over in Vietnam is similar to the U.S. version including function, language, etc. I know that the power used in other countries (like Vietnam, which is 220 volts) is different from the 110 volts we use in the U.S., but my Cousin said there is a step up converter from 110 volts to 220 volts can be used to supply enough power to the PS2. Also a friend said that the PS2 used overseas cannot play U.S. version games, is this true? If this is true, then I'll have my cousin buy games in Vietnam so we'll be able to use it.

Patrick Ha, WeaponGSR@hotmail.com

TOMMY: Your cousin was right in saying that you'll need a convertor to play her PS2 in the U.S., but they're very easy to find in most any electronics store. However, be sure to advise her to buy games there and bring them along, because they're the only ones she'll be using with her machine stateside. Unfortunately, games won't work with PS2s from other regions, not without some kind of mod chip (which we haven't heard about yet for PS2). As you've probably heard, the DVD playback won't work either, because Vietnam is in Zone 3 (Southeast Asia), the U.S. is in Zone 1, and DVD players won't play discs from other zones.

squeezing games that are larger than 650MB onto a regular CD. However, if you ask me, you shouldn't be playing bootleg games in the first place. PSM strongly discourages such activities, as they only hurt the companies that spent so much time and money making those games for your enjoyment.

Relaunch Blues

Is anyone else who got a PS2 annoyed about this whole "relaunch" business? Why should I have to see games such as *The Bouncer* pushed back from January to March just because Sony doesn't think they have enough systems out? I've managed to buy every game out that has interested me, and looks like every excellent game is being moved back to March to be part of this relaunch. I went out on a limb to get a PS2, and now I have to suffer waiting for the truly great games that are complete, but being held back?

Greg Vincent, shadowplay19@juno.com

CHRIS: Sony has had to make a lot of tough decisions. Despite the PS2's incredible early success, there shouldn't have been nearly that many people left out in the cold over Christmas. I think that, since so many people don't believe they can get a PS2 anymore, it's smart of Sony to do this "relaunch" alongside a big shipment of systems. Sony needs to let people know they can get one

now, and throwing in big-name titles like *Bouncer* is a good way of making sure they give PS2 another chance. I don't like waiting for hot games any more than you do, but it's a smart business decision for Sony.

Which Weapons?

1. I would like to know a few things about *Zone of the Enders*. Will there be a way to change the weapon that Jehuty uses or will it just have one? Do the other characters have mechs? Do they help you battle enemies?

2. I would also like to ask about *Shadow Of Memories*. What weapons can you use in this game? I would also like to ask what kind of enemies should I expect to find in this game?

Charlie Kauffman cdkauf2@juno.com

STEVE: 1. *Z.O.E.* pretty much focuses on one main character who pilots a single mech. There might be other characters who show up and help you out, but they will only play minor roles in the storyline. There will be several weapons to choose from, though, ranging from missiles to energy beams.

2. *SOM* actually doesn't really have any weapons in it. That's because the focus is on preventing your death, not causing someone else's. As for enemies, there is really just one and you don't discover who they are until

BAD GUY OF THE MONTH: ECHIDNA (THE BOUNCER)

CRIMES:

Uh... known to associate with the evil Mikado corporation? Accessory to kidnapping? Those are the best charges we could come up with — hardly a rap sheet for a big-time videogame villain.

EVILNESS:

1 out of 10 As far as we can tell, Echidna is only considered "bad" because she works for the evil Mikado corporation.

PUNISHMENT:

She isn't very evil, so, er... her bare bottom should be lightly whipped with licorice by the PSM staff. That'd set her straight.



LINK-UP

► Ali Irshad, age 14

AudiAI@yahoo.com

Favorite Genres: fighting, action

Favorite Games: *Metal Gear Solid*, *Street Fighter*, *Tekken 3*, *Tony Hawk*

Quote: "Ryde or die!" (Ruff Ryders)

► Albert King, age 13

albert_united@hotmail.com

Favorite Genres: RPG, strategy, horror, sports, fighting and racing.

Favorite Games: *Suikoden2*, *Legend Of Mana*, *FF 5&6*, *Tail Concerto*, *Medal Of Honor*, *Crash Bandicoot 1, 2 and 3*.

Quote: "KONAMI 3:16 SAYS JUST BRING IT"

► Metal Maverick, age: 19

metal_maverick@hotmail.com

Favorite Genres: Just about anything with a good story and/or great action.

Favorite Games: *MGS*, *FF7*, *Chrono Trigger*, *Twisted Metal 2*, and *Front Mission 3*.

Quote: "Just pray you're not around me when ' comes out"

► Angie, age 16

QuistisChick@aol.com

Favorite Genres: RPG, Fighting

Favorite Games: *Final Fantasy 6,7,8,9*, *Chrono Cross*, *Thousand Arms*, *RPGMaker*, *Legend of Dragoon*

Quote: "I wuv my Squally Wally Bear and Cloudy Woudy, but what rhymes with Zidane?"

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HARDCORE

Never Too Old

Okay, when *Space Invaders* came out, I bought it for my daughter, but I wasn't really into it. In fact, I never played a videogame in my life until *DOA2* came out. Now I play with my 9 year old grandson and I love it. He kicks my butt, but I'm practicing. Forget demographics, this game is fun. To all the old folks out there who don't think they'll like videogames, get off your high horse and try this out! Kids, don't write Grandma off until you put a controller in her hand and say "Play with me". I'm not giving up *Chess* and *Scrabble*, but now I have a new way to have fun!

"Grandma" Lake Sirmon, lsirmon@bellsouth.net

TOKOYA: *DOA2* is one of my favorite fighting games, so I can understand the attraction. As you now know, videogames have become much more complex and involving since the days of *Space Invaders*. If you want something at a slower pace, and more story-intensive, try *FFIX*. All of you older folks out there that have yet to play any games, I suggest you follow Granny's example; you may discover a whole new world.

CELEBRITY
LETTER

Dear Sirs,

Please find enclosed my resume. Here is a small sample of what I could bring to the PSM team:

- Starred in two Dreamcast games
- Can complete the 100-yard dash in 2.7 seconds
- Loved by millions
- Blue fur a nice accent to any office decor

Thank you for your consideration.

— Sonic the Hedgehog

near the very end of the game. Just be prepared to be completely surprised. We're talking *The Sixth Sense* sort of twisted ending here.

Wear It Out?

My question to you is about the playing of DVDs on the PS2. I heard a rumor that if you watch a DVD movie on the PS2, it will wear down the reading laser 3 times faster than normal. Is this true?

Adriano Foreman, Adriano_Foreman@excite.com

RANDY: Wow, we sure are getting a lot of letters about drives getting worn down this month. Yet again, this is just a rumor, and a totally false one at that. It's just reading data off a disc — whether it be a CD, game, or DVD movie, it's doing the same thing. In fact, the PS2 even has a separate laser eye just for DVD games and movies, so it's not getting used at all when you play CD-based games or music discs.

Talk The Talk

1. I can speak and understand Japanese so I was really happy when the cinemas in *BoF:IV* weren't translated, but my friend doesn't and I was wondering if Capcom was ever going to release a translated version?

2. Do you know if there are going to be anymore *Gundam* games since *Battle Assault* sucked (and the shows kicked ass and deserve better)?

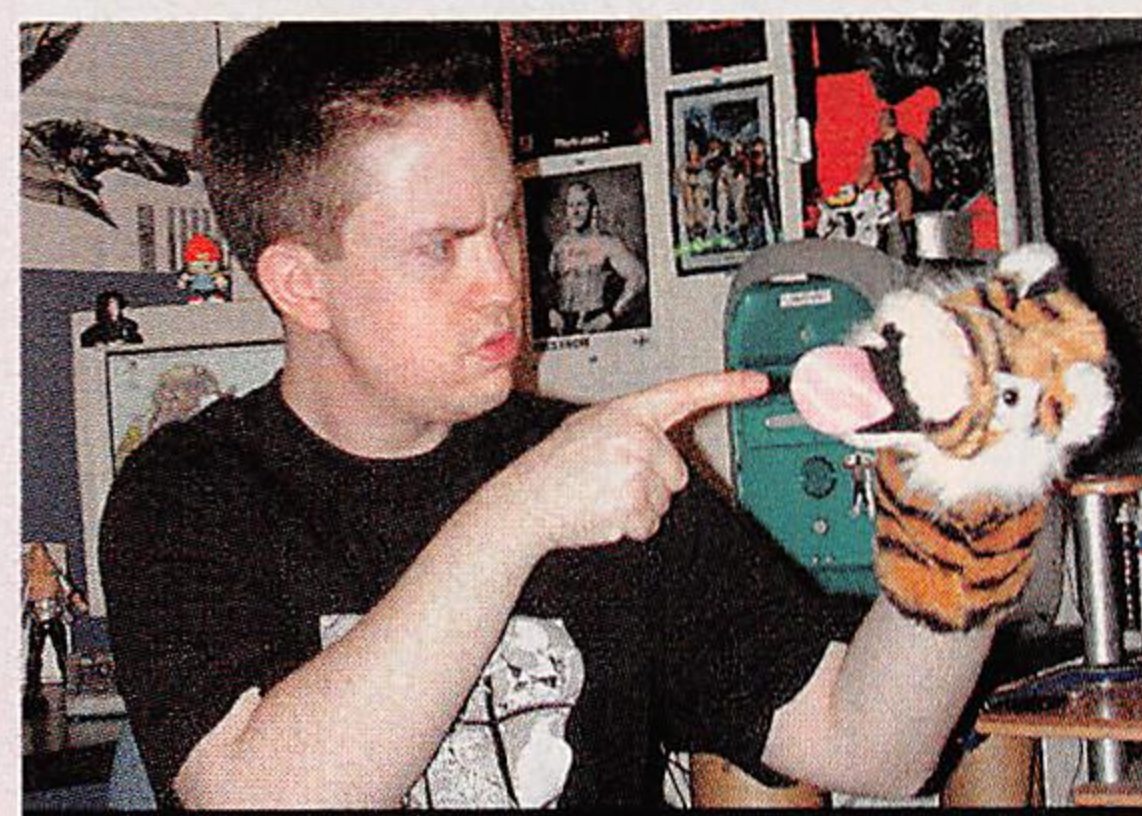
Sin Leonheart, sinleonheart@gundamw.com

TOMMY: It's a wonder that we all don't learn Japanese strictly for the purpose of further enjoying Japan-spawned RPGs! Unfortunately, it's pretty safe to say that *BoF IV* won't get a special translated version for the U.S. market, both because it wouldn't prove that profitable for the publisher and because the RPG genre has reached near-saturation at the end of PlayStation's life-cycle. Even though the characters are so very fleshed out throughout the course of the story, and the dedicated RPG fan-base embraces special editions, Capcom is currently diverting its attention more to PS2. Thankfully, its bigger fish to fry are the likes of *Devil May Cry*, and *Onimusha* and *Resident Evil* sequels.

There have been tons of questions from PSM readers on when Bandai America will offer anything new from the *Gundam* series (not to mention *Digimon* and *Dragonball Z*). As far as *Gundam* goes, we've been tracking a PS2 game with the working title of *Mobile Suit Gundam* for quite some time. While there's no definite release date, *Mobile Suit Gundam* will feature a few plot lines from the original *Gundam* TV series, including Amuro Rey and White Base, pilots from throughout the Universal Century cannon, and a very healthy dosage of animation FMVs. However, mech fans who haven't pledged allegiance to *Gundam* may want to jump the gun with *Zone of the Enders*, partly because ZOE offers the gameplay and control that the *Gundam* series has typically been short on.

DOWNTIME

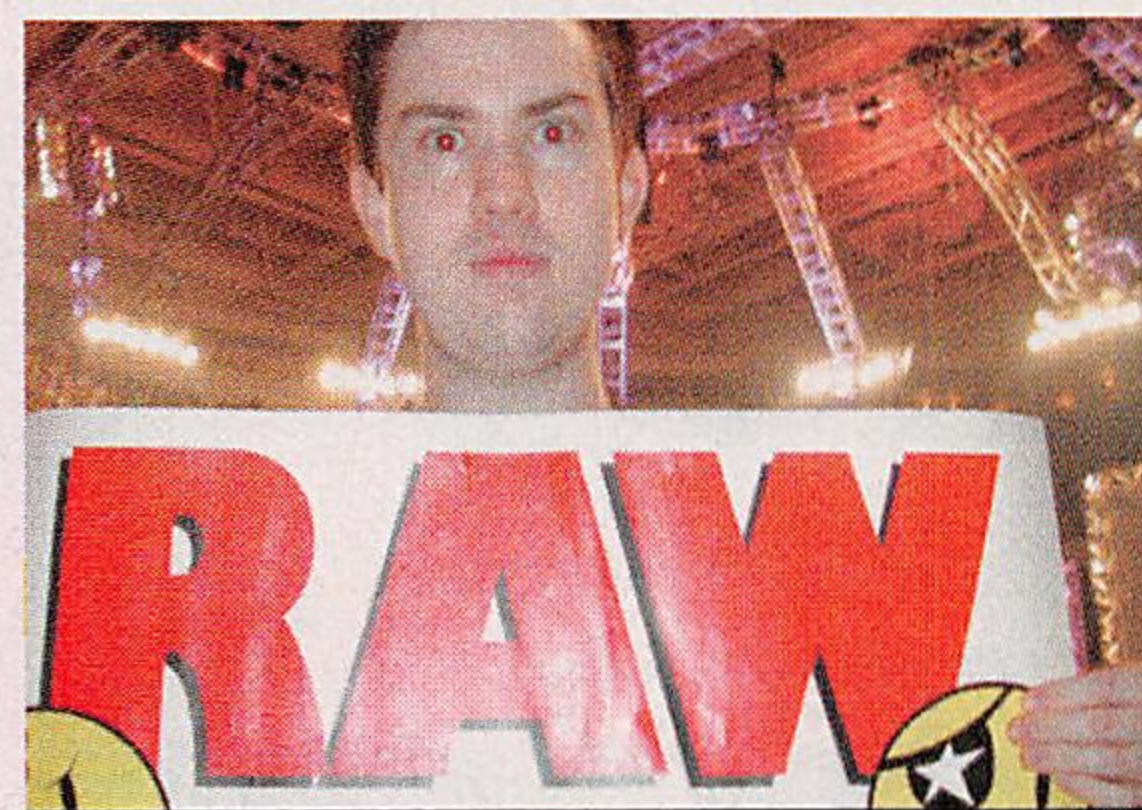
Hey, only 99% of our time is spent on playing games! We do other stuff, too!



▲ Randy's been busy this month teaching his new pet tiger new tricks. And going to the shrink...



▲ Ever the thrifty spender, Chris cuts costs by cutting coupons. Then he gambles what he saves.



▲ Here are a couple of extra pics from PSM's trip to WWF RAW last month. Randy made this sign...



▲ ...And Chris bumped into an avid PSM reader, who is apparently our "Number-Two" fan.

LINK-UP

► **Mike Tedeschi**, age 13
Favorite Genres: RPG
Favorite Games: *FF7*, *FF8*, *Threads of Fate*, *Xenogears*, *Legend of Dragoon*
Quote: "Name's Bond, James Bond!"

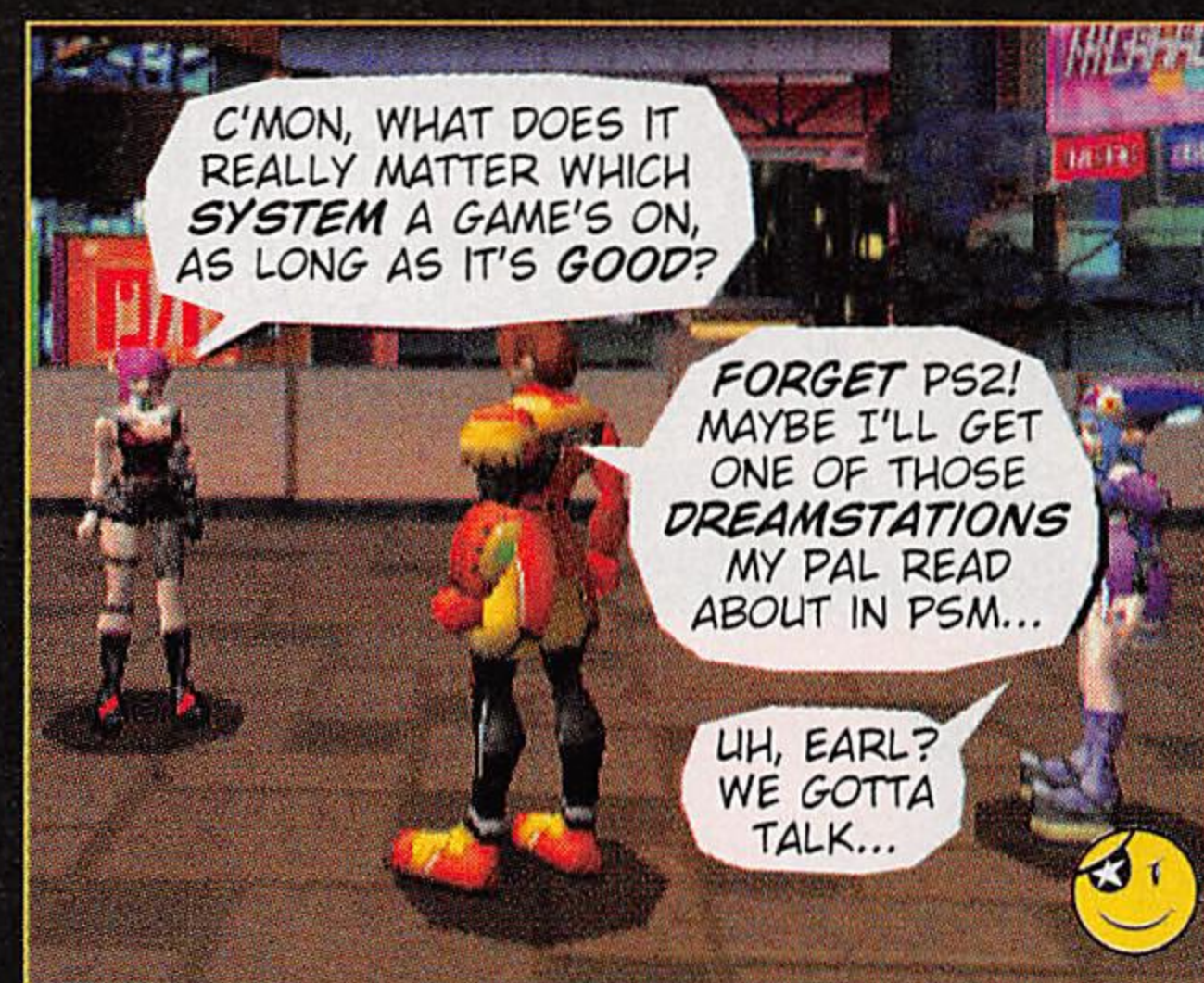
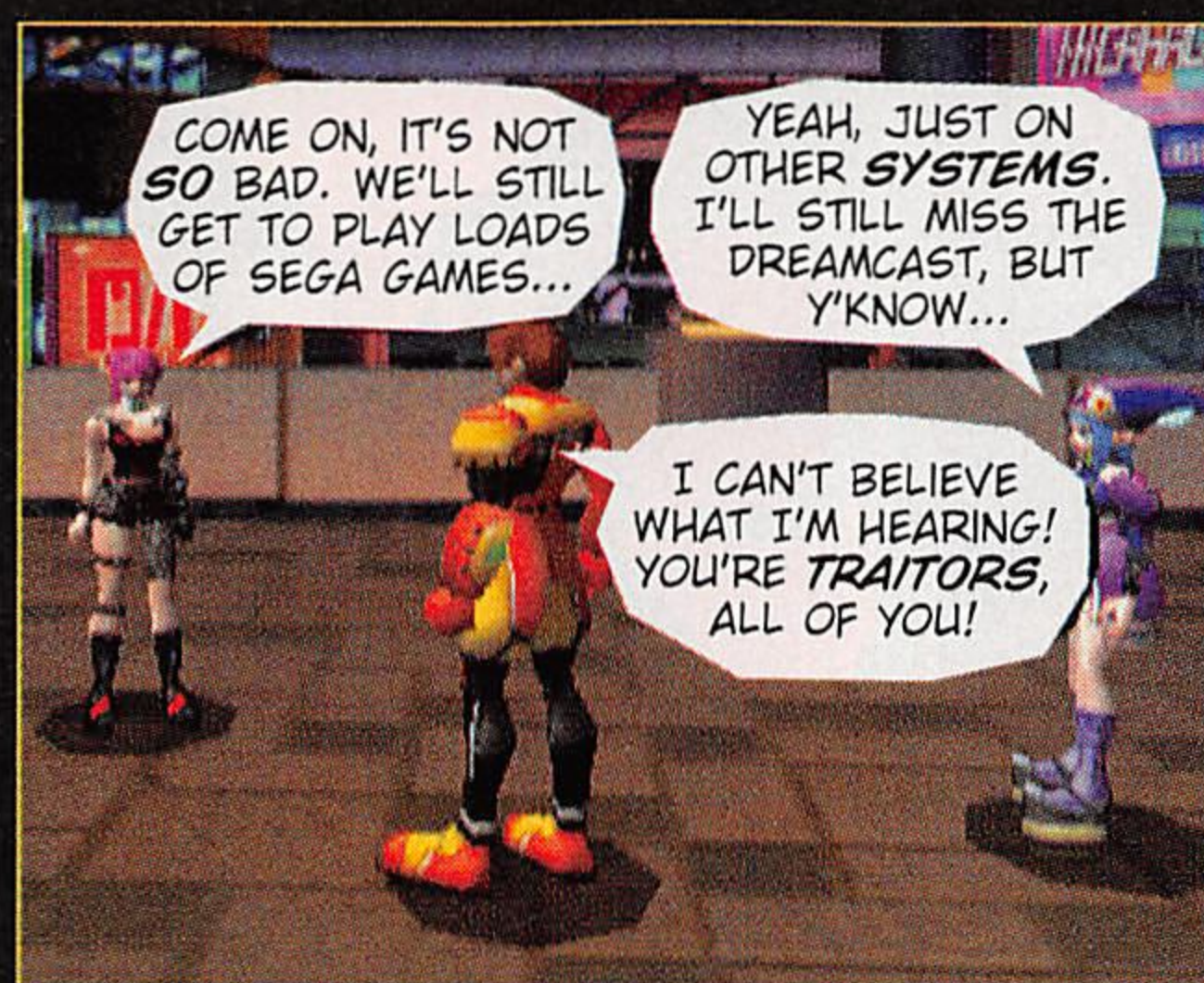
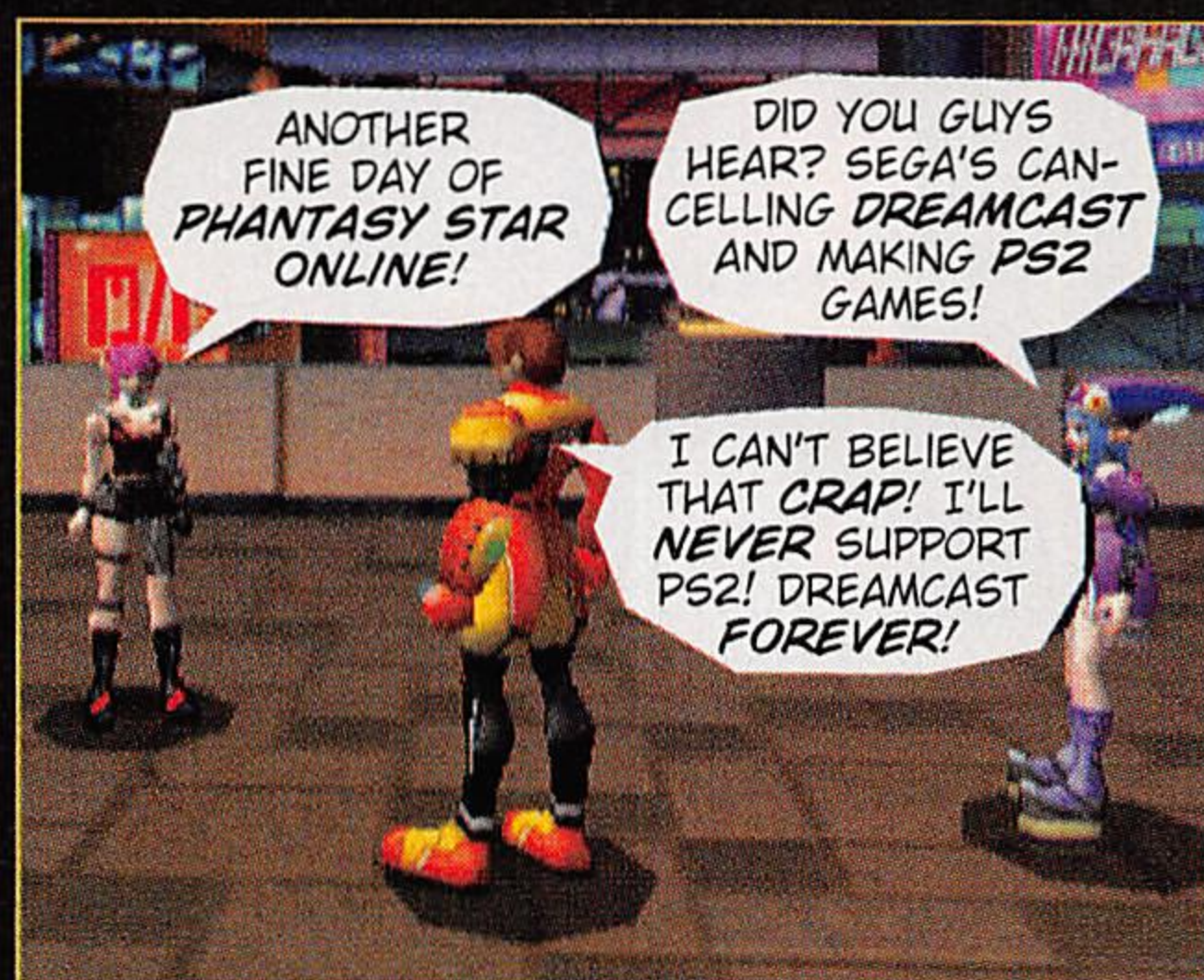
► **Travis Stassin**, age 16
PlastikXX@aol.com
Favorite Genres: Fighting, sports, action, adventure, survival horror
Favorite Games: *Tony Hawk 1& 2*, all *Resident Evils*, *Metal Gear Solid*, *Dragon Ball GT*, *Final Bout*
Quote: "Bio-Dome is the best movie ever!"

► **Tyler Garcia**, age 14
Garty_21@hotmail.com
Favorite Genres: Action, Adventure, Survival Horror, Shooters, Racing, Fighting, pretty much every type
Favorite Games: *Tony Hawk 2*, *Resident Evil Series*, *Metal Gear Solid*, *DOA2:Hardcore*, *SSX*
Quote: "I pity da' foool!" — Mr. T

► **Sharp Child**, age 13
sharpneedlepoint@yahoo.com
Favorite Genres: Action, Fighting, Anything thats funny.
Favorite Games: *Vigilante8*, *Worms*, *Armageddon*, any *Street Fighter*.
Quote: "I know you are, but what am I?" — Paul (Pee-wee) Reubens

smart bomb

GOD BLESS THE HARDCORE



Rare Discs

I recently went on Ebay to look around for anything that involved Playstation 2. Curious, I typed in *Gran Turismo 3*. To my surprise, there were two listings for *GT3*. They were both listings for a demo disk released in the U.S. that features three cars (Honda S2000, Acura NSX and Mustang Cobra R). Under the traditional title was the word *Aspec*. The seller also goes on to say that the rare disk was given to a member of the press to sample. I was wondering if you could shed some light on my discovery and how I can try to snag a copy before the launch.

Chris Modrell, Sunnyvale, CA

CHRIS: I know just the disc you're talking about, Chris. All of us in the press got them sent to us, but they mainly went out to certain retailers to play at PS2 demo kiosks. Unfortunately, there's no official way for consumers to get hold of one. If you have to have it, ebay sounds like your only option. It shouldn't be long before the final game hits the shelves though, so it's probably best to just wait it out, if you can.

Frost Fights Back

I am writing in response to the *Megaman X5* review by Steve Frost in the Feb. issue. I truly disagree with what was said in the context; it is not the lack of innovations that damages *X5*, it is the innovations themselves! Time-based gameplay

and multiple endings do NOT belong in a game that is supposed to wrap up an entire series. The *Mega Man* series is dying because Capcom continues to focus its time on their survival horror games and the horrible *MM Legends* series in order to appeal to a 3D audience/make money. How dare they move on to newer products without taking on the responsibility of ending an original series first! (The *X* series) has been lingering around for about 8 years now, and that's why the 2D games are failing, and money does not replace quality. Lack of ideas will make for poor games, and Capcom doesn't seem to use their brains and do something RIGHT for *Mega Man X*; end the series. Does anyone have the heart to agree with me?

Chris Cook, nicestguy1@hotmail.com

STEVE: While I agree with a lot of the things you say, Chris, I still feel that *Mega Man* is just too stale now. That series should have been revamped more and included way more innovations. You can get basically the same experience playing the first *X* game and that's just wrong. Let's hope Capcom reinvents the series for this next generation of consoles. If they don't, our favorite robot will probably end up being shut down.

TECH TALK

Dithering Idiots

This may have been already addressed, but I can't seem to find anything about it online or in print. It's about my PS2's PlayStation 1 mode. For some reason, it seems that the PS2 in PS1 mode doesn't display a full color palette. It looks like it uses some rough screen dithering to "simulate" colors. Now this wouldn't seem like a big deal, but when you play a game that already uses some form of dithering to simulate depth or anything else that may look grainy to begin with, it gets really noticeable. Is this problem with all PS2's or just mine? Is this fixable with a future PS1 driver version? by the way, I have the 1.10 version. I've heard that there is a 1.20 version, but Sony claims that there are no functional differences between the two. If that is the case, why was there an update?

Eric, Adress Withheld

RANDY: I've never seen this phenomenon on any of our U.S. systems, but the only thing I could think of is it has something to do with the texture smoothing mode of the PSone driver. I've noticed that when playing some 2D games, the texture smoothing can really mess things up (create seams in backgrounds, etc.), but I have never seen this in 3D games. So, you should first deactivate texture smoothing and see if that works. If not, try a friend's machine and see if theirs does it. If it doesn't, my only other suggestion would be to contact Sony's tech support (their number's in your manual) and see if they can offer any explanation.

LINK-UP

► **John Howard**, age 14
master_gee90@hotmail.com
Favorite Genres: RPG
Favorite Games: All RPGs
Quote: "Where's my burrito?" - Homer

► **Mike**, age 18
Mtrunks17@ignmail.com
Favorite Genres: racing, fighting, action, sports
Favorite Games: *Spiderman*, *Castlevania SOTN*, *Metal Gear Solid*, *DOA2*, *Dragonball GT*, *FF7*, *Time Crisis*
Quote: "No one alive has been good enough to beat me yet"

► **David Becerra**, age 16
snake_mgs2@yahoo.com
Favorite Genres: Action, horror, racing, adventure, fighting.
Favorite Games: *Syphon Filter* series, *Resident Evil* series, *NFS 2&3*, *Spider Man*, *Tekken Tag*, *DOA:Hardcore*.
Quote: "There isn't going to be a rescue" - Jill Valentine

► **Justin Williams**, age 18
psychoapeguy@whoever.com
Favorite Genres: I like 'em all!!
Favorite Games: *The Final Fantasy* games, *Parasite Eve*, *Metal Gear Solid*, *Chrono Cross*, *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater*, *Tekken 3*, *Silent Hill*, *Brave Fencer Musashi*, *WWF Smackdown*, *R4: Ridge Racer Type 4*, plus several others.

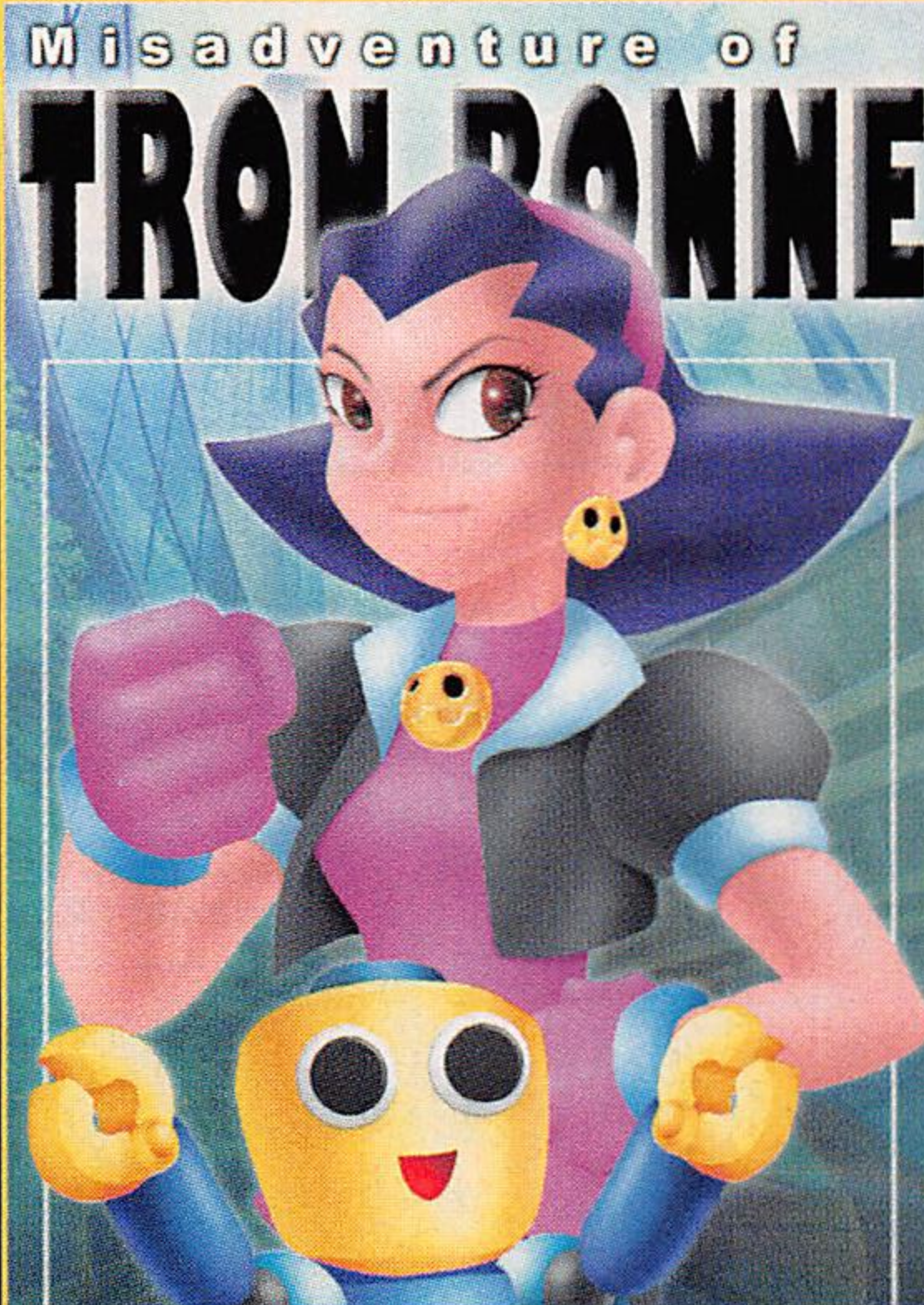
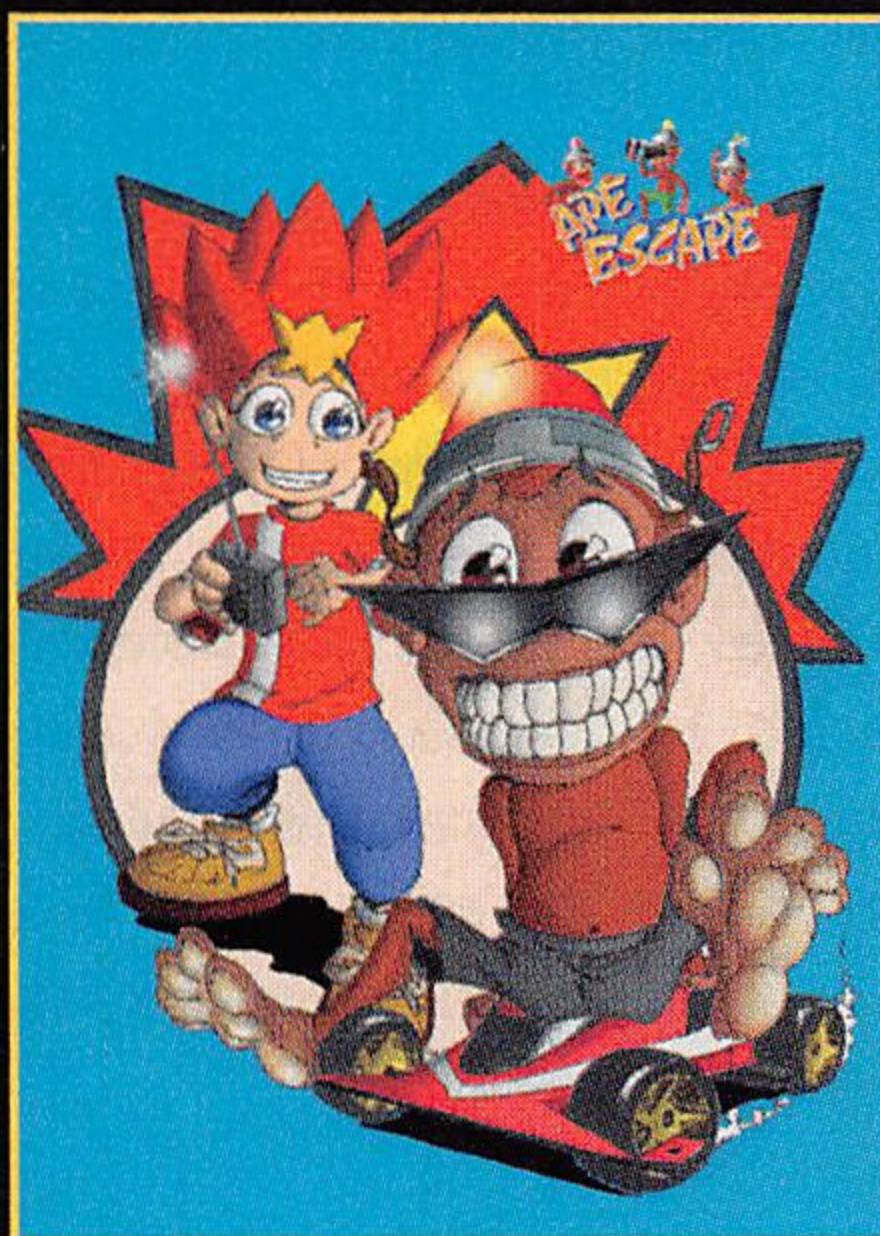
PSM FAN ART

Every month we take a look at the coolest PlayStation fan art from the hottest new talents. If you've done an illustration that you'd like to see printed here, send us a copy! (We'll take originals too, but we can't return them). Address it to **PSM Fan Art, c/o Imagine Media, 150 North Hill Drive, Brisbane, California 94005**. Or, even better, e-mail a hi-res version of the piece to us at psm@imaginemedia.com. Be sure to label the subject heading "Fan Art." Now get busy! :-)

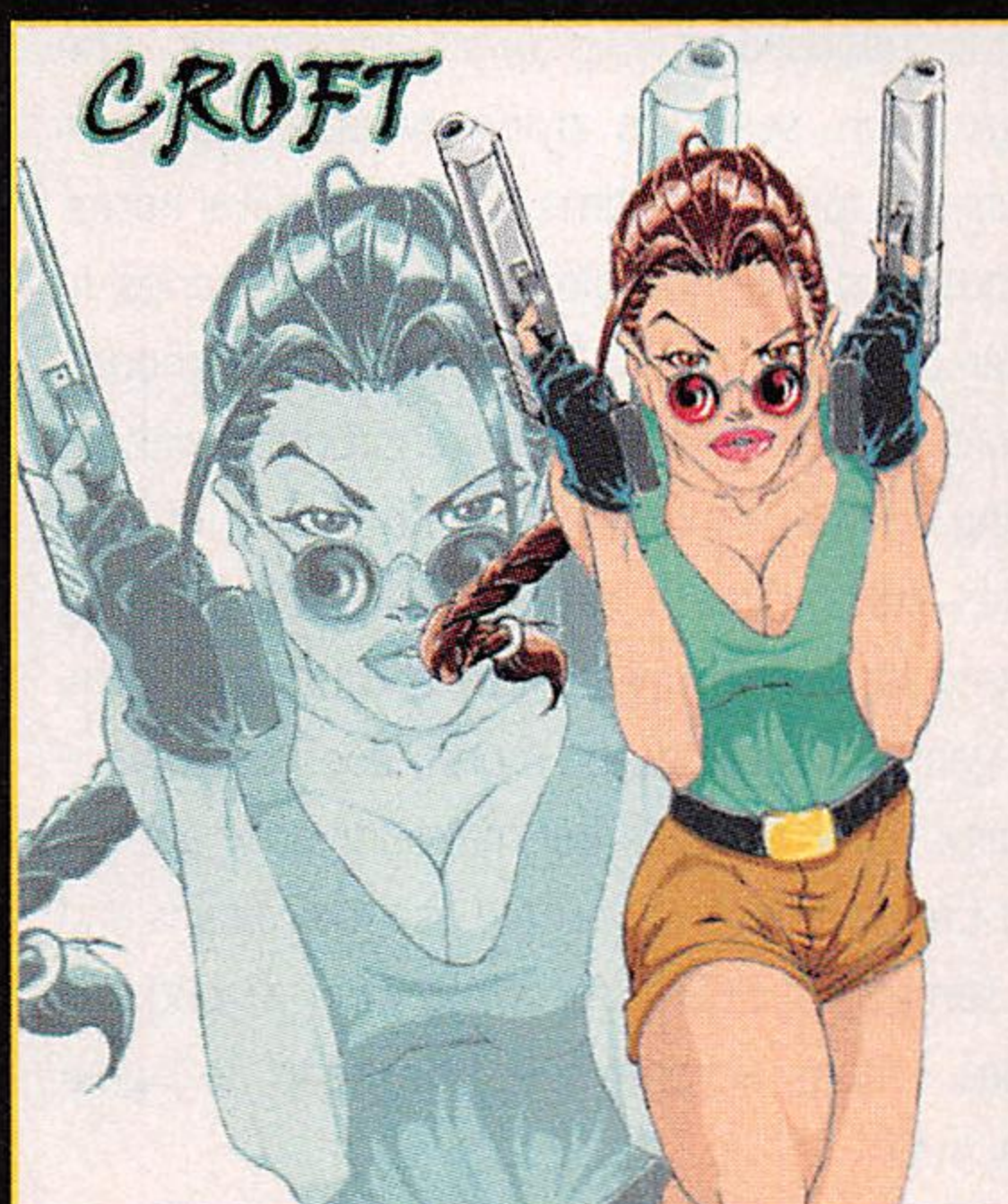


▲ In honor of our big cover story this month, we're giving the big space to **STEVE MILLER's** awesome Razel artwork. The colors in this piece are particularly cool, like the green soul mist.

► We don't get nearly enough *Ape Escape* fan art, so a big "thanks" goes out to **BORIS PELCER** this month. And it's even showing off our favorite item, the remote control car!

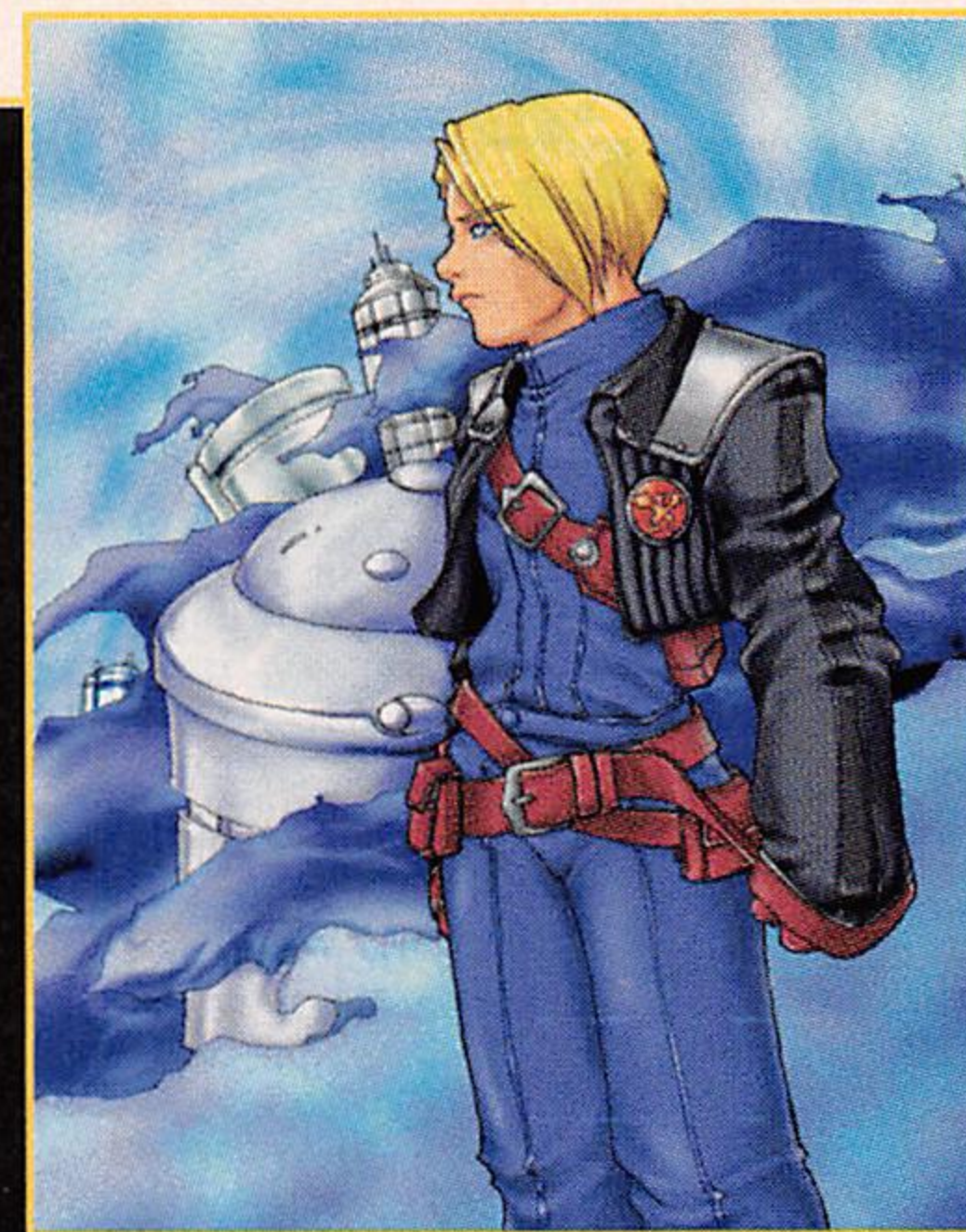


▲ **ERI GAUDIAMO** is always good for great fan art, like this killer Tron Bonne illustration. Great work!

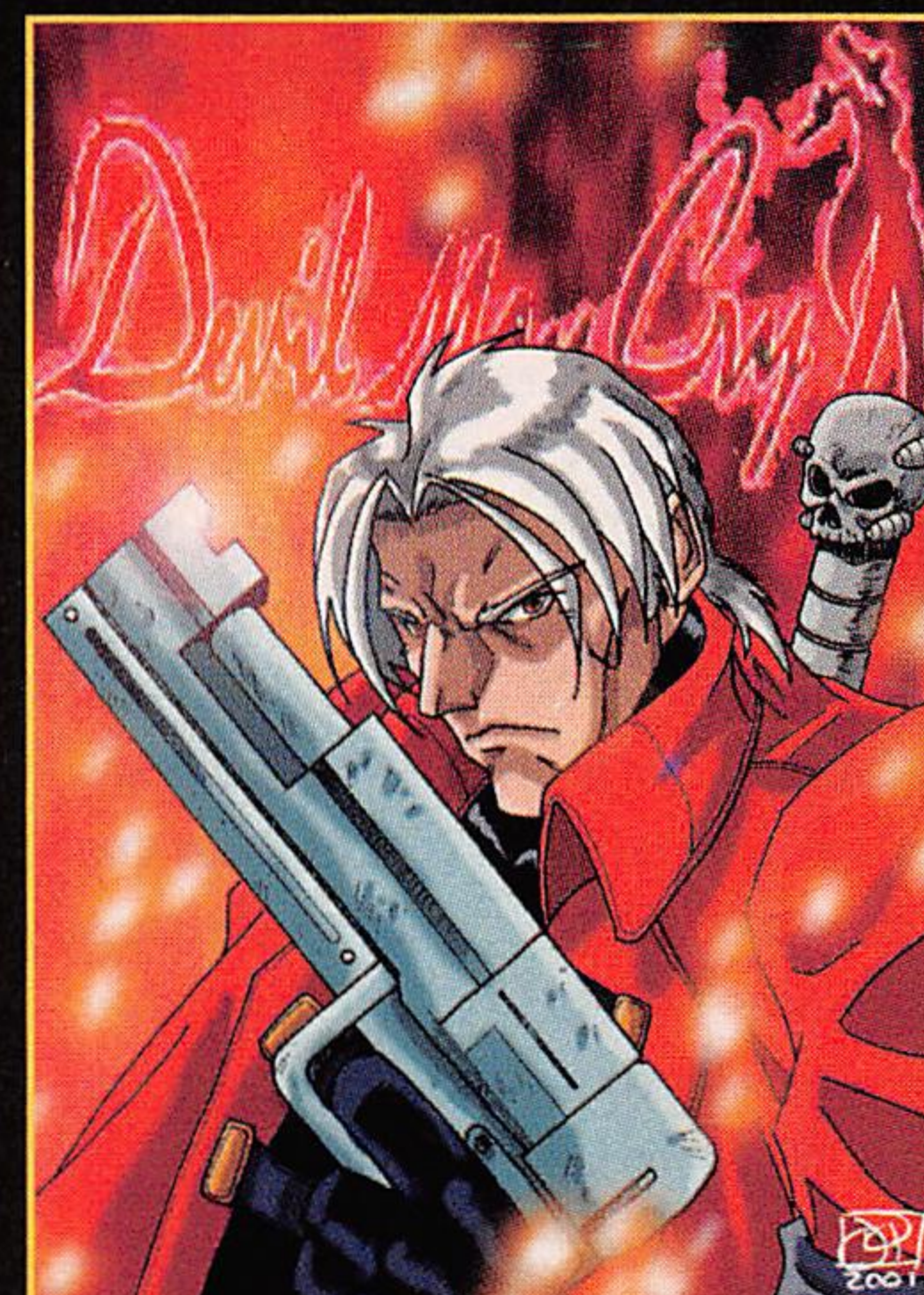


▲ Somewhere it must be written that as long as there is a fan art section, there will be Lara Croft fan art. You guys can't get enough of this big-breasted wench! Our latest addition to the Lara Gallery comes from **BRENO BOLDUC**, and features her assets well.

► We always love to see characters from different games get together, so you know we were stoked to see this piece come in from **RANDALL NG**. Great job, Randall!



▲ The action scenes are always nice, but we also love subtle pices like this one from **KYUBI KITSY**.



▲ Check out this bitchin' anime-style *Devil May Cry* piece from **DAVID PIELICH!**

LINK-UP ►

► **Bojan Letic (Kurgan)**, age 16
 Undertaker1356@aol.com
Favorite Genres: All Genres
Favorite Games: All
Quote: "I will steal your Soul!"

► **Cauvin Mo(aZn)**, age 15
 AiM: CyborgRyuX
 multianime@yahoo.com
Favorite Genres: RPG's, Survival Horror, Simulations, Wrestling.
Favorite Games: Parasite Eve 2, Final Fantasy 8, Resident Evil 2
Quote: "Oop I did again.....I died, oh baby baby where's my gameshark?"

► **Ben Heagy**, age 13
 threeboys@nbn.net
Favorite Genres: Action, Adventure, RPG, Shooter, Fighting
Favorite Games: Final Fantasy series, Resident Evil series, Wild Arms, Secret of Mana, Illusion Of Gaia, MGS.
Quote: "How bout some milk sideburns?"

► **Marc Vaccaro**
 marc_vaccaro@hotmail.com
Favorite Genres: RPG, Action, Adventure, Role Playing and racing
Favorite Games: Final Fantasy 7, 8, 9, Legend Of Dragoon, Gran Turismo 1, 2, 3, Ridge Racer 5, Metal Gear Solid
Quote: "If you want the meat, microwave the dog... you heard me.."

MARKETPLACE

The place to buy, sell, or trade games, peripherals, and anything else related to the PlayStation

AD OF THE MONTH

David Mendoza

zofo07@aol.com

Description: I am selling a Playstation 2 with an extra controller, Memory Card, *Summoner*, *SSX*, *Madden 2001*, and S-Video Cables for \$800.00. Serious inquiries only!

► Vandal

VANDALSmX@aol.com

Description: Hey folks! I have some bad news for myself, but some good news for you. My mom is making me get rid of my collection of PSM magazines. I every issue since number 8 to number 40 (except #27). I am selling them for a dollar a pop. E-mail me for special deals and shipping cost. I am also selling *Resident Evil 3* without the original case or booklet for 8 bucks and *Lunar Silver Star Complete* with all the original goodies for \$35.00

► James Herried

medacrab@hotmail.com

Description: I have in my possession 2 Memory Cards, able to hold up to 1080 blocks of memory on each Card that will save PS1 games on your PS2. I have Mod-Chips for only \$20.00 each, not only that, but they are the new 8 wire stealth Mod-chips, being able to play such new games as *Dino Crisis 2* and *Tony Hawk 2*. (All Mod-Chips come with instructions) And lastly for the grand finale I just visited Japan and I brought me back 2 Japanese version PocketStations. Prices are yet to be determined on PocketStations. E-mail if interested, or need info on anything.

► Zachary R Wickers

gamerduke69@juno.com>

Description: I'm looking for *Time Crisis w/ Lightgun*, *PSX GameShark Pro*, and *Resident Evil 3*.

► Will

DivineWyvern125@aol.com

Description: I am looking for *Klonoa* or *Xenogears*. I am willing to trade *Legend of Dragoon* for *Xenogears*, and 20 dollars for *Klonoa*. Also willing to pay 30 dollars for *Xenogears*. Minus 5 dollars for each if it doesn't include jewel case, minus 2 dollars if it doesn't include manual.

► David Ocampo

ocampo02@juno.com

Description: I'm selling *Chrono Cross*, *Xenogears*, *FF9*, *Vagrant Story*, *FIFA 2000*, *MLS*, *Legend of Mana*, and *Tony Hawk 2*. Each

game is being sold at 20-30 dollars, or even lower! I also have a game enhancer for sale at 25 dollars!

► Andrew Stafford

ths-1115@troy.k12.oh.us

Description: This is a great deal to spend the holiday cash on. This package contains 1 Playstation 2 Console, 4 Sony Dual Shock Controllers, 1 Playstation 2 Multitap, 2 PS2 8M Memory Cards, and two of the best games: *Madden NFL 2001* and *SSX*. I will take the highest amount and the amount starting is \$500. If the amount gets up there, I'll throw in some DVDs and pay for shipping.

► Chris Laird

wigcrackerx@aol.com

Description: I am selling my Sega Saturn with an ST key and my *Dragonball Z* import game. I will take the highest offer

► Brian Blackwell

BJB@intelinfo.zzn.com

Description: I am selling a PlayStation that works 100% well with a dual shock controller and *Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver* or *Dino Crisis* for \$50. I also have a Sega Genesis (3rd edition) with 2 controllers and *Robocop Vs Terminator* for \$20. I will also negotiate for *Final Fantasy IX*.

► Darren Cooper

DLC_4@webtv.net

Description: I own a copy of *Strider2*, along with *Strider1*. I am willing to sell it for \$35. I also have a gameshark pro for \$45 and I have a turbo controller for \$20 I will trade both *Striders* and a gameshark for *Smackdown 2*. E-Mail me if interested.

► Degenerate

raether@crcwnet.com

Description: I am selling a few PlayStation games for a decent price. I have *Bushido Blade1* for \$10. *WCW vs. the World* for \$5. A Demo that comes with a PlayStation for \$1. *Darkstalkers 3* for \$10. *Mortal Kombat 4* for \$10. *WWF In Your House* for \$5. And *Tekken 2* for \$10. Email me for further information on my games.

► Kitty

kitty494@lycos.com

Description: I am looking for *CHRONO TRIGGER*, *SECRET OF MANA*, *FF2*, *FF3*, *FF4*, *FF TACTICS* and any *ULTIMA* games for NES or SUPER NES. If you or anyone you know has these games, let me know via e-mail. Highest prices paid!

► Bojan Letic

altec_lansing84116@yahoo.com

Description: I am looking to trade *Thousand Arms* (with Booklet and stickers), *Alien Trilogy*, *Nuclear Strike 1*, *Sled Storm*, *Oddworld:Abe's Exodus*, *Knockout Kings 2000*, *NBA Live 2000*. I am looking for

Resident Evil 2, *Castlevania SOTN*, any *Dynasty Warriors* game, *Silent Hill*. E-mail me if you are interested.

► Dan Tanhoff

the_dtd_man@yahoo.com>

Description: I am selling/ trading a SNES and I am also selling about 25 games with it. It is in very good condition and the games work perfectly. E mail me for game names and prices, but I will take best offer. I am also looking for *Legend Of Mana*, *Resident Evil Survivor*. I will buy or trade for these.

► Sir Kawaii

kawaii_15@hotmail.com

Description: I am willing to sell a mint condition *Tenchu: Birth of the Stealth Assassins* for the PlayStation game console for \$20 plus shipping costs. Game is in perfect condition besides the fact that it has been opened. There are no scratches and the manual is also perfectly intact.

► Joe Gonzalez

joe0192@hotmail.com

Description: I bought *FF8* used at EB a while back, and it turns out that the second disc doesn't work (damn that 7 day return policy). Anyway, I need to buy it again. I'll take anything as long as the second disc is in good shape. I'm also looking for *Chrono Cross*, *Chrono Trigger* for SNES, and *Tony Hawk 2*. I have *Area 51* and *Donkey Kong Country1,2* for SNES. E-mail me with best offers and stuff!!! Willing to buy and trade other RPGs, too.

► Michelle Nakamura

MtN1684@aol.com

Description: I am looking for *Chrono Trigger* (for SNES). E-mail me for prices.

► Brendin Coleman

brendincoleman@hotmail.com

Description: I am selling a Nintendo 64 with two controllers around the price of \$90 (negotiable). I am also selling *Donkey Kong 64* W/expansion pack, *Star Wars Rogue Squadron*, *Star Wars Episode One Racer*, *Namco Museum 64*, *Duke Nukem Zero Hour*.

► Sergio Gaona

spitfire701@yahoo.com

Description: PlayStation ONE Game Console, AC Adapter, AV cable, 2 memory cards, 2 controllers, and nine games. These nine games are: *Tony Hawk Pro Skater 2*, *Brave Fencer Musashi*, *Gran Turismo*, *Gran Turismo 2*, *Final Fantasy VIII* (all 4 discs in near mint condition), *Twisted Metal 2*, *Street Fighter Alpha 3*, *NFL Blitz*, *Tomb Raider* — ALL ONLY \$170

► Ryan Moxley

monsoonmox@hotmail.com

Description: I'm looking to trade a copy of *Orphen: Scion of Sorcery* for PS2. I am looking for just about any other PS2 game in return, but especially *DOA2: Hardcore*, *Smuggler's Run*, or *Summoner*. Please e-mail me if you are interested.

► Robert Edmonson

hardcore_guru@yahoo.com

Description: I'm looking for a Super Nintendo with *Final Fantasy 4*. Will pay good price or trade lots of PlayStation games for what I'm looking for. Email me for a list of about 40 Playstation games that I own.

► Jeff Smith

grumpyass1@home.com

Description: Hello, I am looking to sell the following games for prices I am willing to take and I will negotiate on most. *Tomorrow Never Dies w/ Strategy Guide* (\$15), *Small Soldiers* (\$5-\$10), and if you buy either game, I will through in a few demo disks. I have one on *Cool Boarders 2001*, *Spyro The Dragon*, and one from Pizza Hut that has demo of *Metal Gear Solid*, *Crash Bandicoot 3*, *Grand Turismo*, and a couple more. If you are interested, please e-mail me.

► Jacob Anderson

KNPMMainiac@aol.com

Description: I am willing to trade/sell *Tony Hawk 2* and/or one for *Driver*, *MGS* or *Hogs of War*. I also have many other PS & PC games in stock. E-mail me with your offers and games you want to trade.

GET RID OF OLD GAMES!

If you'd like to place your own, totally free ad in PSM, just jot down your name, address and/or e-mail; tell us whether you're looking to trade, sell, or both; and give us a brief description of what you're offering or want. **Be sure to include your city and state.** Send all of that info to:

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c/o Imagine Media
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Brisbane, California 94005**

You can also send e-mail to:

psm@imaginemedia.com

(Be sure to put "marketplace" in the subject heading.)

BTW,
we can't vouch
for the credibility of
any of the people who
place ads here, so
swap at your
own risk!

A detailed illustration of Konoko, a character from the video game Oni. She has vibrant purple hair styled in a high, spiky ponytail. Her eyes are a striking green, and she has a determined, slightly fierce expression. She is wearing a dark, tactical suit with orange and grey accents, including a shoulder guard and a gauntlet. The background is dark and textured, with faint blue patterns resembling binary code or circuitry.

GAMES

GIRLS

GEAR

Konoko from Oni
by Bungie



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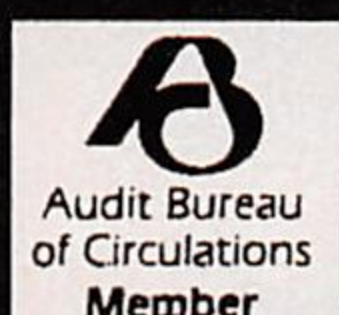
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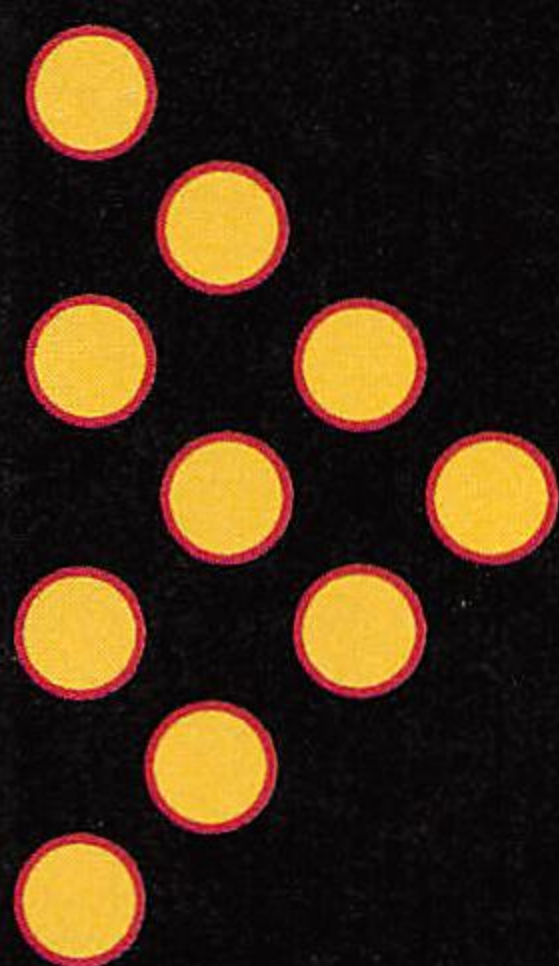
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RESET

This issue's over, but another one is already on the way

NEXT MONTH

COUNTDOWN TO E3

With only a month to go before the annual E3 videogame expo, we'll have tons more on the big titles that will be shown there!

ZONE OF THE ENDERS: REVIEWED

We've been drooling over Konami's new mech game for months, and next issue we'll finally get down and dirty with a finished copy.

THE LOVELY LADIES OF PLAYSTATION — NUDE!

Sorry, we couldn't resist one last April Fools joke :-). Besides, isn't it the mystery that makes them so alluring? Yeah, right...



▲ WRITE A FUNNY CAPTION FOR THIS PICTURE!

▲ WRITE THIS CAPTION!

Jot down a funny caption for the game screen up above, and if we like yours the best, we'll send you a PSM Prize Package filled with PlayStation games and goodies! Send your entry to **PSM Caption #44**, c/o Imagine Media, Brisbane, CA 94005 (or at psm@imagemedia.com, with "PSM Caption #44" in the subject header). Be sure to include your phone number so we can contact you if you win. Good luck!

AND THE WINNER IS...

Rander Haywood of Suitland, MD is the winner in our December Caption Contest. You can check out his winning caption below. Rander, your PSM Prize Pack is on the way!



▲ Knowing that Triple H will interfere, The Rock gives up and piledrives himself.

3 YEARS AGO IN PSM...

APRIL, 1998

Get ready for BLASTO! ...or not.

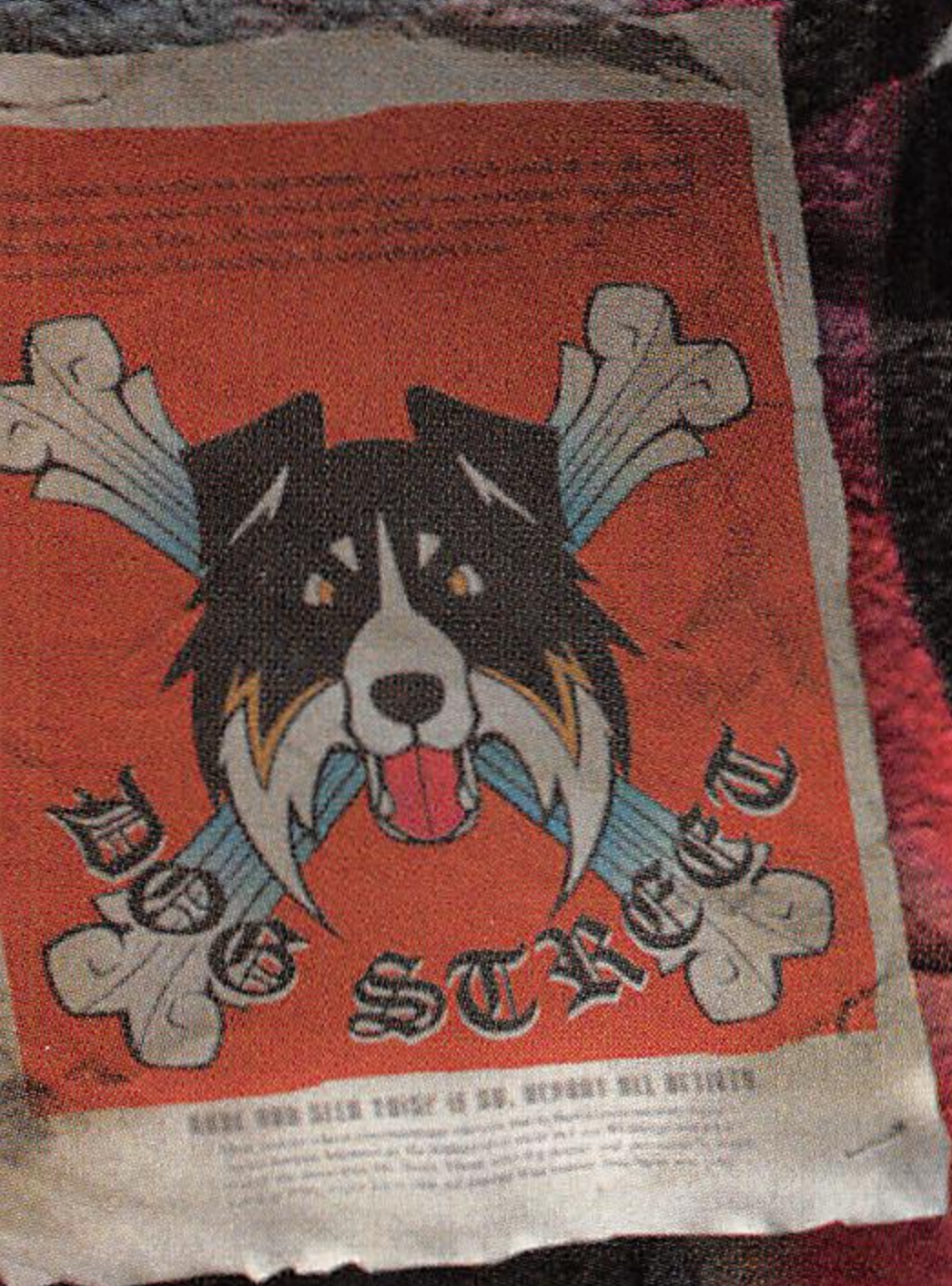
When we first heard of Sony's *Blasto*, it sounded cool... then it ended up sucking. So, we'd like to take this opportunity to apologize for any exclamation marks that we used after the word "Blasto" that issue. At least the babes on the cover with the big hooters were a plus.

People were still playing their way through *Resident Evil 2* that month, and with what little extra time they had, were starting on *Breath of Fire III*. And, Punky Skunk arrived to prove once and for all that Super NES graphics won't sell on the PlayStation. Thanks for trying, Punky.

Everyone was talking about the big wave of new RPGs on the way, including *Lunar*, *Tales of Destiny*, *Saga Frontier* and *Suikoden II*. Good times were on the way!

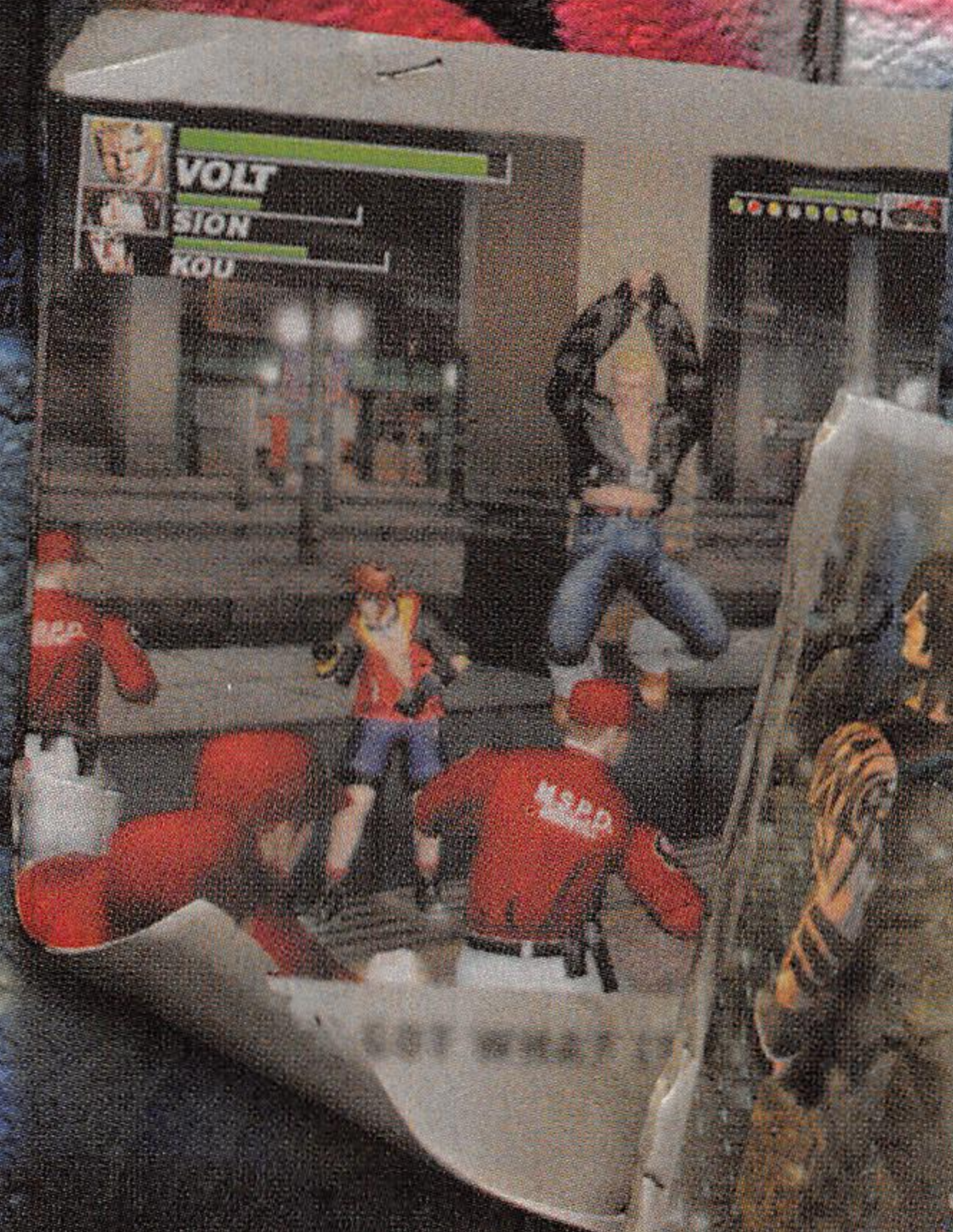


▲ If Blasto were a REAL hero, he's toss us the babes and jump off that cliff, landing right on his head.



Slor, a man haunted by a tragic past
Within him lies strength and kindness, but also great sorrow
All this will change when he meets a girl named Dominique
These are the residents of DOG STREET

The Bouncer™



PlayStation®2

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Animated Violence



SQUARESOFT

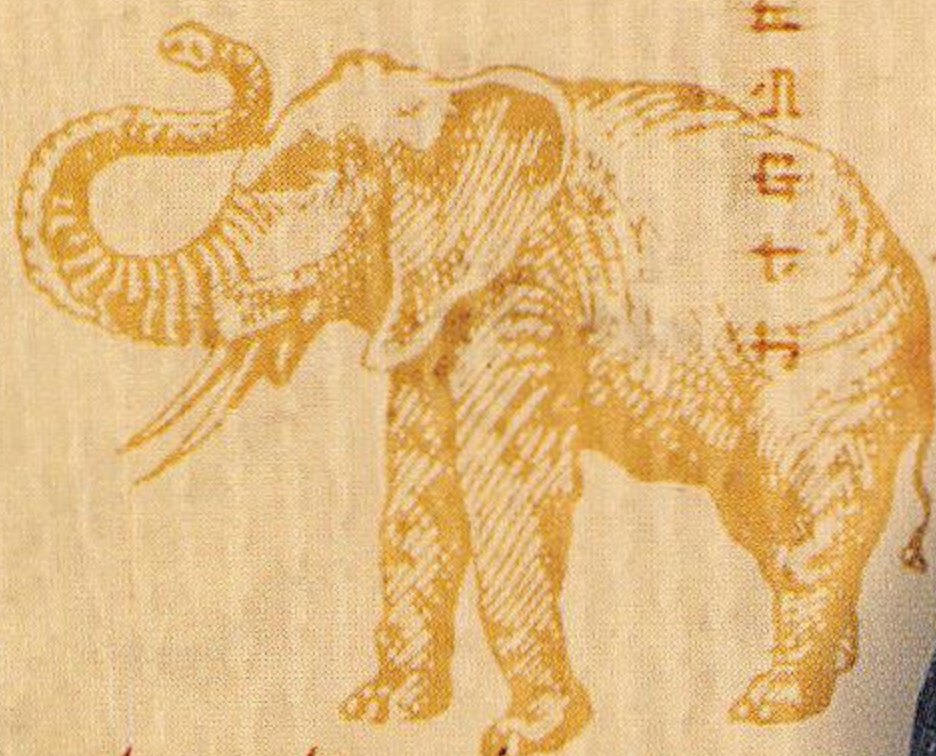
PICK A WORLD
WE'LL TAKE YOU THERE

鬼 ONIMUSHA Warlords 者

武士
山
丹
沢
正
幸
三



Cleverness is as deadly as the sharpest sword when wielded by one with ample fortitude and directness.



Strength in the physical being is multiplied tenfold by the warrior who practices strength on matters of the mind and spirit.



Only through unyielding courage can a warrior overcome those obstacles which at first appear overwhelming.



Blood and Gore
Violence

PlayStation 2



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